

# **FERS Retirement Contributions Program**

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## ***FY 2008 Formula Grant Opportunity (FGO)***

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:    October 30, 2008**



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**



**Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service**

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**FERS RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRAM**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE:** This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.500.

**DATES:** Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on October 30, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) requests applications for the FY 2008 formula grants authorized under the FERS Retirement Contributions Program. These grants are used to defray the FERS Retirement costs to the 1862 land-grant institutions for the former Schedule A Appointments who conduct agricultural extension work. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2008 is \$3,391,434.

This notice identifies the objectives for FERS Retirement Contributions Programs, the eligibility criteria for applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a FY 2008 FERS Retirement Contributions Program formula grant allocation. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next FGO for this program. Please send questions or comments to Brenda Barnett, Budget and Fiscal Specialist, Stop 2299, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2299; telephone: (202) 401-6520; fax: (202) 401-7752; or e-mail: [formulagrantsquestions@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:formulagrantsquestions@csrees.usda.gov).

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## **PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Legislative Authority and Background**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. No. 110-161) provides funds for the retirement costs of the former Schedule A Appointments at the 1862 land-grant institutions. These funds are allocated to the 1862 land-grant institutions with former Schedule A Appointments based on each institution's relative share of the total payments to OPM during the previous year. The separate allocation of funds for this purpose is being phased out over a 10-year period, beginning in FY 2008.

The Schedule A 213.3113 (a) (1) was issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to employ individuals in the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) as a joint appointment between USDA and the land-grant institution. The official title of Schedule A appointees includes the title Agent (e.g., Agent/Cooperative Extension Director; Agent/Cooperative Extension Educator) as by law only agents with a Schedule A appointment were eligible to participate in the Federal benefit plan(s).

Employment is dependent upon an individual's appointment in the CES at the university. The appointment must be a regular position with at least 50 percent of the staff's time dedicated to extension projects, and the appointee must work and be paid over a 12 month period.

Agents in the Cooperative Extension program are not classified under the General Schedule (GS) classification system or any other Federal pay system. The positions are classified by the employing land-grant institution, and the salary is established according to policies and procedures at the institution.

The OPM has the authority and responsibility for issuing rules and regulations covering Schedule A appointments and resulting benefits. OPM has delegated to the USDA the responsibility for overseeing and managing Cooperative Extension Schedule A appointments and the accompanying Federal benefits, (e.g., retirement and insurance plans). The Human Resources Division (HRD)/Cooperative Extension Service (CES) Team with Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) carries out this function for USDA.

Effective January 31, 2003, the authority to grant Schedule A Excepted Appointments to CES employees was terminated. Public Law 107-171, Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, dated May 13, 2002, Section 7220, terminated the Schedule A appointing authority used by USDA to grant a companion Federal appointment and Federal benefits to state/university employees of the Cooperative Extension Service. The law allowed the CES Federal appointees that were employed on the day before the date of the enactment of the Act, (i.e., May 12, 2002), to: a) continue to accrue Federal creditable service for retirement; and b) participate in the following benefits as long as the employees continued their employment with the Cooperative Extension Service:

- 1) the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB);

- 2) the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI);
- 3) the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS);
- 4) the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS);
- 5) the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP); and
- 6) the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

The Federal Office of Workers Compensation Program (OWCP) is the only Federal program that will not continue as it is not a program that the dual appointee was vested in. Claims already on file with the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Workers Compensation Office will continue to be processed by the DOL. Using a formula based in the prior year's injury or illness claims, CSREES will pay these claims on behalf of each institution and charge that institution by reducing its annual retirement allocation by the amount remitted. If the amount of claims paid exceeds the institution's annual retirement allocation, CSREES will bill the institution for any OWCP costs in excess of the annual retirement allocation.

Changes and new features for the current Federal Benefits programs such as FEHB, FELGI, TSP and FLTCIP will be offered to the CES organizations and employees that are eligible to participate in the affected program(s). However, former Federal appointees cannot participate in new Federal benefit programs that were not in effect as of May 12, 2002.

Effective January 31, 2003, CES can no longer grant Schedule A Federal appointments to new employees because they no longer have a Federal appointment authority available to make new Federal appointments. Former CES Schedule A appointees may be reappointed to another CES organization and continue their benefits as long as they do not have a break in service.

In FY 2007, CSREES conducted a Grants.gov pilot for the solicitation of one of the CSREES Formula Programs, the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program. Under this pilot the institutions were required to submit a SF-424M Application (Cover Page Form), CSREES Supplemental Form, and Key Contacts Form through Grants.gov. Please note that this application package replaced the forms/information solicited each year by the CSREES Office of Extramural Programs and did not duplicate the information being collected under the Current Research Information System (CRIS). CSREES is implementing this process for all CSREES Formula Programs in FY 2008 due to the mandated reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). Under this law, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was required to develop and maintain a public searchable data base for all Federal financial assistance awards, and Federal agencies are required to report specific data elements which will be collected via these applications (e.g., Dun and Bradstreet data Universal Numbering (DUNS) numbers, legal name of institution, legal address, congressional district, etc.). OMB makes this information available at <http://www.usaspending.gov>. The law also requires by January 1, 2009, subaward data be made available through the same public website.

Please note that the submission of this application package does not change the following:

- Delegated authorities of the Extension Director or 1890 Extension Administrator
- How funds are managed at your institution

-Indirect costs and tuition remission are unallowable costs

Guidelines for the administration of this program are published as Chapter III, Financial Operations, of the Administrative Handbook for Cooperative Extension Work, which may be accessed at <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/formula/manuals/coopextension.pdf>. Please note that any instructions in this FGO supersede policies and procedures identified in this manual. CSREES will be revising this manual and will promulgating administrative provisions for this program through rulemaking which includes a public comment period in 2009.

## **B. Purpose and Priorities**

The purpose of this funding is to defray the FERS retirement costs to the 1862 land-grant institutions for former Schedule A appointees performing agricultural extension work.

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

FY 2008 Federal funding of \$3,391,434 will be distributed according to an administrative formula described above. See Appendix A for specific allocations.

FERS Retirement Contributions Program funds are expected to be fully expended in the fiscal year of appropriation: however, funds allocated may be carried over for up to four years from the year end for which they were appropriated.

### **B. Type of Submission**

In FY 2008, pre-award form submissions must be submitted to the FERS Retirement Contributions Program as a “new” application on the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website. As noted previously, these application packages complement, rather than duplicate, the information collected via the Plan of Work (POW) System, and together satisfy all legislative and regulatory pre-award requirements.

### **C. Project Types**

Applicants should request funding at the amounts listed in Appendix A to this announcement. CSREES will fund the FERS Retirement Contributions Program in FY 2008 for FERS retirement costs to the 1862 land-grant institutions.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Recipients**

Applications may be submitted by 1862 land-grant institutions that are making payments to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for FERS retirement costs for the former Schedule A Appointments. See Appendix A for the list of eligible institutions.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Section 3(e)(1) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. §343(e)(1) states, with regard to institutions in the 50 states, “no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.” However, section 3(e)(4) of the Smith-Lever Act (U.S.C. §343(e)(4) provides that “Effective beginning for fiscal year 2003, in lieu of the matching funds requirements of paragraph (1), the insular areas of [American Samoa,] the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, [Micronesia, the Northern Marianas Islands,] and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the formula funds distributed by the Secretary to each of the insular areas, respectively, under this section. The Secretary may waive the matching fund requirement [of 50 percent] for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year.”

## **PART IV—SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Address to Request Formula Grants Opportunity Package**

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this FGO.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the State Extension Director (ED) or his or her designee, first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The State Extension Director or his or her designee, also must contact the institution’s AR in order to be granted permission for the submission of applications through Grants.gov. Once that permission is granted, the State Extension Director or his or her designee, can obtain a login and password.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install Adobe Reader, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See [http://www.grants.gov/help/download\\_software.jsp#adobe811](http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811).
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions,” enter the funding opportunity number “USDA-CSREES-OP-001806” in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

**If assistance is needed to access the application page** (e.g., downloading or navigating PDF forms, using Adobe with a Macintosh computer), refer to the resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support  
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726  
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

## **B. Content and Form of Formula Grants Opportunity Package Submission**

### **General**

Each grant application must contain an “Application for Federal Assistance,” Form SF-424 Mandatory; “Supplemental Information Form,” CSREES Supplemental Information Form; and “Key Contacts Form,” SF-424 Key Contacts. If applicable, use the “attachment form” to submit a matching waiver request (as a PDF file). See E(2) of the part for more details. These forms should be completed in accordance with the instructions accompanying the form on the grants.gov website. The following are the government-wide instructions followed by *agency specific guidelines*, if any, for each data element for each form:

### **Grant Application Package**

Verify that the information shown corresponds to the grant for which the applicant wishes to apply. Grants.gov will auto-populate the following information:

- Opportunity Title
- Offering Agency
- Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number
- CFDA Description
- Opportunity Number
- Competition ID
- Opportunity Open Date
- Opportunity Close Date

- Agency Contact

Enter a name for the application in the \* **Application Filing Name** field. This field is required. This name is for use solely by the applicant for you to track through the Grants.gov submission process. It is not used by the receiving agency.

Open and complete all of the documents listed in the “Mandatory Documents” box. Complete the SF-424 first. Data entered on the SF-424 will populate other mandatory and optional forms where possible.

To open an item, simply click on it to select the item and then click on the “Open Form” button. When a form or document has been completed, click the form/document name to select it, and then click the => button. This will move the form/document to the “Completed Documents” box. To remove a form/document from the “Completed Documents” box, click the form/document name to select it, and then click the <= button. This will return the form/document to the “Mandatory Documents” or “Optional Documents” box.

### 1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form (SF)-424 M (Mandatory))

- 1a. **Type of Submission:** Select one Type of Submission with agency instructions. *Select “Application.”*
- 1b. **Frequency:** Select applicable frequency for the Type of Submission in 1.a. *Select “Annual.”*
- 1c. **Consolidated Application/Plan/Funding Request?** Indicate if the submission is a consolidated application/plan/funding request. *Select “No.”*
- 1d. **Version:** Select the applicable version for the Type of Submission in 1.a:
  - Initial: Select “Initial” prior to the start of the fiscal year. Use it to submit your institution’s application package, including its estimated Federal and matching funds based upon the latest information available from CSREES. **This option will not be used in FY 2008.***
  - Resubmission: Select “Resubmission” when your institution has filed an accepted “Initial” or “Update” package and now desires to revise any of the information on those applications, such as its key contact personnel or matching funds available. Any matching waiver requests would be attached to this package as well.*
  - Revision: Select “Revision” if your institution discovers an error or omission in the “Initial,” “Update,” or “Resubmission” application, or if you are requested to do so by CSREES as the result of its review of the application.*
  - Update: Select “Update” when the fiscal year’s final allocation is published. Use this submission to revise your institution’s “initial” application to reflect its actual Federal funds and matching funds as well any other changes to the application data (e.g., DUNS number, address, Key Contact information). Any matching waiver request would be attached to the package as well.*

*For your first submission via Grants.gov in FY 2008, please indicate “update.” There will be no “initial” version for FY 2008. This will be the first, and more likely, the only package your institution submits for FY 2008.*

2. **Date Received:** Federal use only.
3. **Applicant Identifier:** Applicant use only. *Use or leave blank.*
- 4a. **Federal Entity Identifier:** Enter Federal entity identifier, if any, as specified in agency instructions. *Leave blank.*
- 4b. **Federal Award Identifier:** Enter Federal award identifier assigned by agency (if applicable). Enter “USDA-CSREES-OP-001806”
5. **Date Received by State:** State use only. *Use or leave blank.*
6. **State Application Identifier:** State use only. *Use or leave blank.* This field is for use when an institution has its own system for tracking applications. This field allows the applicant to enter its application identifier on the application.
- 7a. **Legal Name:** Enter the following: Legal name of applicant. *Enter the name of the institution.*
- 7b. **Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):** Enter: Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service.
- 7c. **Organizational DUNS Number:** Enter: Organization’s D-U-N-S® number (received from D&B) or the D-U-N-S +4 number®.
- 7d. **Address:** Enter: Complete address of applicant. *Enter the institution’s mailing address.*
- 7e. **Organizational Unit:** Enter: Name of primary organizational unit (and department/division, if applicable), which will undertake the assistance activity. *Enter the office where the State Extension Director or his or her designee, is located.*
- 7f. **Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:** For the person to contact on matters related to this submission: name, organizational affiliation (if affiliated with an organization other than the applicant organization, e-mail address, phone number, and fax number. *Enter the contact information for the person performing this electronic submission.*
- 8a. **Type of Applicant:** Select the appropriate letter and enter in the space provided. Letters O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, and W are not applicable.

- A. State Government
- B. County Government
- C. City or Township Government
- D. Special District Government
- E. Regional Organization
- F. U.S. Territory
- G. Independent School District
- H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education
- I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized)
- J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Other than Federally Recognized)
- K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization
- L. Public/Indian Housing Authority
- M. Nonprofit with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)
- N. Nonprofit without 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)
- X. Other (specify in accordance with agency instructions)

*Enter "H".*

9. **Name of Federal agency:** Enter name of Federal agency from which assistance is being requested. *No entry required. This field is pre-populated from the opportunity package.*
10. **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number and title of the program under which assistance is requested. Use the continuation sheet to enter multiple CFDA numbers and titles. *No entry required. This field is pre-populated from the opportunity package.*
11. **Areas Affected by Funding (Cities, Counties, States, etc. Use continuation sheet on page 5 if necessary):** List areas or entities affected using categories specified in agency instructions. Use the continuation sheet to enter multiple entities beyond the space provided. *Enter cities, counties, states, etc. anticipated to be affected by the FY 2008 allocation you will receive.*
- 12a. **Congressional Districts of (Use continuation sheet on page 5 if necessary), Applicant:** Applicant-Enter the applicant's congressional district. Enter the congressional district. *Enter the Congressional district where the main campus is located.*
- 12b. **Congressional Districts of (Use continuation sheet on page 5 if necessary), Program/Project:** Program/Project-Enter the congressional district(s) affected by the program or project. If all congressional districts are included for a State, use "all", e.g., all congressional districts in Maryland would show as MD-all). Use the continuation sheet to enter multiple congressional districts that represent less than all congressional districts in a State or congressional districts in multiple States. *(Note: If this application is being completed by someone other than the State Extension Director, the State Extension Director or his or her designee, may need to be consulted on this question.)*

- 13a. **Funding Period, Start Date:** Enter the start date of the funding period for this submission. *Enter "10/01/2007".*
- 13b. **Funding Period, End Date:** Enter the end date of the funding period for this submission. *Enter "09/30/2008"*
- 14a. **Estimated Funding, Federal:** Federal-Enter the amount requested from the Federal agency. If the agency has specified an amount, enter that amount. *Enter your institution's FY 2008 allocation from Appendix A to this announcement.*
- 14b. **Estimated Funding, Match:** Match-Enter the amount of funds from all other sources. Enter the amount your institution will match.
15. **Is Submission Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12732 Process?** *Select "c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12732."*
16. **Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt?** Select the appropriate box. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit disallowances, loans, and taxes. This question applies to the applicant (institution) organization.
17. **By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in this list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances and agree to comply with any resulting terms (as identified under Part VI, B) if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001) To be signed by the State Extension Director or his or her designee, of the applicant organization. Enter the name, title, phone number, e-mail address, and fax number of the State Extension Director or his or her designee. *The required assurances designated here includes the institutions compliance with all Federal laws and regulations associated with receipt of Federal Domestic Assistance for this program, including the matching certification. By hitting the submit button of the application, the State Extension Director or his or her designee, certifies to the above.***

## 2. CSREES Supplemental Information Form (Required)

1. **Funding Opportunity Name:** *No entry required. This is pre-populated from the opportunity package.*  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** *No entry required. This is pre-populated the opportunity package.*
2. **Program Code Name:** *Enter "FERS Contributions Program"*  
**Program Code:** *Enter "FERS"*

3. **Type of Applicant:** *No entry required. This will be pre-populated from your entry on the application cover sheet.*
4. **Additional Applicant Types:** *Select the appropriate institution type from the drop down menu in this block.*
5. **Supplemental Applicant Types:** *Please check all that apply.*
6. **HHS Account Information:** *Click on the radio button next to “Yes”. Enter your HHS PIN number in the appropriate box. IMPORTANT: IN THIS CONTEXT YOUR PIN NUMBER IS YOUR HHS ACCOUNT NUMBER. DO NOT ENTER THE PASSWORD YOU USE TO ACCESS THE HHS PAYMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.*
7. **Key Words:** *Enter “Not applicable.”*
8. **Conflict of Interest List:** *Leave blank.*

### **3. Key Contacts Form (Required)**

**Applicant Organization Name:** Enter the complete legal name of the institution.

**Contact 1 Project Role:** *Enter the contact information for the State Extension Director.*

**Contact 2 Project Role:** *Enter the contact information for the State Extension Director’s designee.*

**Contact 3 Project Role:** *Enter the contact information for the Business Office Manager/Administrator for this program.*

**Contact 4 Project Role:** *Enter the contact information for the person responsible for drawdowns.*

### **4. Matching Funds Waiver Request (Optional)**

If your institution is applying for a matching fund waiver, please prepare a request in PDF format. Please include the following elements in the request:

- (a) a request for the waiver by grant,
- (b) a statement of the fiscal year(s) for which the waiver is requested,
- (c) a statement of the amount of waiver being requested by fiscal year and how the amount was computed (by matching fund category),
- (d) a statement of why the waiver is required,
- (e) documentation supporting the need for a waiver, and
- (f) the institution’s efforts to meet future matching needs.

The documentation should include the institution's approved budget for the program for both the current and previous budget cycles. It may also submit items such as a statement from the local government asserting what portion of the required match amount the local government contribution to the institution will cover, a schedule of projected cash flows showing what portion of the matching funds the institution will have available or other documents such as letters from local government or institution budget personnel or newspaper articles. In requesting the waiver, the institution must consider the availability of all permissible forms of matching in detail.

Please attach the matching waiver request to the "Attachments Form." To attach waiver request to the form, go to "1) Please add Attachment 1," click on "Add Attachment," and follow the instructions.

### **Saving the Application**

The application package can only be saved from the Grant Application Package screen. It is recommended that after the applicant completes each form/document that they click on the "Close Form" button to close the form and then save the application package by clicking on the "Save" button at the top of the Grant Application Package Screen. It is important to note that the application package will be saved to the last active directory on the applicant's computer. Therefore, the applicant should save the application package to their hard drive where it can be easily accessed. The applicant may save their application package at any time and should save the application package with the same file name each time. An error message will occur each time that the applicant saves the form before completing all of the mandatory fields on the mandatory forms or the optional forms are moved to the Optional Completed Documents for Submission column on the application package. The applicant may ignore this warning. This warning will not appear when all of the mandatory fields have been completed on all of the forms/documents in the application package.

### **Check Package for Errors**

To initiate the Grants.gov edit check process, simply click on the "Check Package for Errors" button at the top of the screen. This process will identify all mandatory fields that have not been completed by the applicant. These errors will be displayed one at a time.

No checks against CSREES business rules will take place at this time.

## Submitting the Application

The AR must open the browser, open the application and then press the Submit button. To submit the application:

1. Close all open browser(s) and running applications.
2. Open the internet browser.
3. Navigate to the physical location where the application file is located. Select the application to open.
4. The internet browser will open the application. This may take a few moments. Please be patient.
5. Once the application is completely open, click the **Submit** button. (The Submit button will not become active until all mandatory documents have been properly completed and the application has been saved.)
6. Click **Sign and Submit**.
7. Next, enter your username and password.
8. Lastly, click **Login**.

Only the AR has the authority and user rights to **Sign and Submit** an application to Grants.gov. Additional submission tips may be found at the Grants.gov website.

Grants.gov Submission Tips: [http://www.grants.gov/help/submit\\_application\\_faqs.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp)

## C. Certifications

**Important Note:** By signing Form SF-424-M, the applicant is providing the certifications required by 7 CFR Part 3017, regarding Debarment and Suspension and Drug-Free Workplace, and 7 CFR Part 3018, regarding Lobbying, and compliance with the provisions of Chapter III, Financial Operations, of the CSREES Administrative Handbook for Cooperative Extension Work, including 7 CFR 3015, Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations; 7 CFR 3019, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-profit Organizations; 7 CFR 3016, Uniform Administration Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to States and Local Governments; and OMB Circulars A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (now codified at 2 CFR Part 220), and A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-profit Organizations (now codified at 2 CFR Part 215). If the project will involve a subcontractor or consultant, the subcontractor and/or consultant should submit a Form AD-1048, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions, to the grantee organization for retention in their records. This form should not be submitted to USDA.

## D. Submission Dates and Times

An "Application for Federal Assistance," Form SF-424 Mandatory; "Supplemental Information Form," CSREES Supplemental Information Form; "Key Contacts Form," SF-424 Key Contacts; and if applicable, "Attachment Form" with a matching waiver request (as a PDF file), should be submitted online at the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website by COB on October 30, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time).

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses on the Key Contacts Form on the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website.

**If an applicant has not received an acknowledgment within 60 days of the submission, the applicant must contact the Agency contact (see Part VII) immediately and ask for the application number assigned to the application. Failure to do so may result in the application not being processed and funding being held.** Once the application has been assigned an application number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.

The Formula Grants Section, Financial Operations Branch, within the Office of Extramural Programs will determine if all program, financial, and administrative requirements have been met prior to the release of funding.

## **E. Funding Restrictions**

### **(1) Approved CSREES FERS Retirement Contributions Programs**

CSREES FERS retirement allocations must be used to support FERS retirement costs for former Schedule A Appointments.

### **(2) Matching**

Section 3(e)(1) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. §343(e)(1) states, with regard to institutions in the 50 states, “no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.” However, section 3(e)(4) of the Smith-Lever Act (U.S.C. §343(e)(4) provides that “Effective beginning for fiscal year 2003, in lieu of the matching funds requirements of paragraph (1), the insular areas of [American Samoa,] the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, [Micronesia, the Northern Marianas Islands,] and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the formula funds distributed by the Secretary to each of the insular areas, respectively, under this section. The Secretary may waive the matching fund requirement [of 50 percent] for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year.”

CSREES may consider and approve matching waivers submitted by 1862 land-grant Institutions in insular areas.

Please note that these matching funds may be used for any extension activity identified in the state plan of work.

### **(3) Indirect Costs and Tuition Remission**

In accordance with section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. §3319), indirect costs and tuition remission are unallowable as FERS retirement contribution formula grant expenditures.

## **PART V—SUBMISSION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

The Formula Grants Section, Financial Operation Branch, within the Office of Extramural Programs will determine if all program, financial, and administrative requirements have been met prior to the release of funding.

## **PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. General**

Once all program, financial and administrative requirements have been met by the eligible institution, funding will be released.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A — USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3 — USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A — USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121 — USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015 — USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017 — USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018 — USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying.

7 CFR Part 3019 — USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (now codified at 2 CFR 215).

7 CFR Part 3052 — USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407 — CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

### **C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

Financial reporting via the SF-269, Financial Status Report, for FY 2008 is due to the Formula Grants Section, Financial Operations Branch within the Office of Extramural Programs on April 1, 2009. The SF-272, Federal Cash Transactions Report, for each calendar quarter is due online at the DHHS website ([www.dpm.psc.gov](http://www.dpm.psc.gov)) on the 15th day of November, February, May, and August for the preceding calendar quarter. See the DHHS-PMS website for specific dates. DHHS may restrict payment requests from the grantee's account if the SF-272 report is not submitted on time.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

For questions regarding FERS retirement contributions, please contact: Brenda Barnett, Acting Team Leader, Formula Grants Section, Financial Operations Branch, Office of Extramural Programs, Stop 2299, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2299; Telephone: (202) 401-6520 ; Fax: (202) 401-7752 ; E-mail: [bbarnett@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:bbarnett@csrees.usda.gov)

For questions relating to the completion of the grants.gov forms and funding release, please contact: Brenda Barnett, Office of Extramural Programs, Stop 2299, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2299; Telephone: (202) 401-6520 ; Fax: (202) 401-7752 ; E-mail: [formulagrantsquestions@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:formulagrantsquestions@csrees.usda.gov)

If help is needed with the Grants.gov registration process for the applicant organization, downloading or navigating PDF forms, using Adobe Reader with a Macintosh computer or with the technical aspects of submitting to the Grants.gov system, check the resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov>).

Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support  
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726  
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

If the Authorized Representative (AR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of an application, please contact Grants.gov customer support.

When Grants.gov is contacted, a ticket number is issued to track the response. The applicant should maintain the ticket number as documentation of electronic issues associated with the application.

Grants.gov Help Desk Operations Process is described below:

Tier 1: Grants.gov Contact Center Operator

- Handles the initial contact and attempts to resolve the call.
- If not, files a research request (escalation).

Tier 2: Research Analyst

- Escalations go to the research analyst who does further research on the issue.
- Unable to resolve, issue escalated to Grants.gov Program management Office.

Tier 3: Grants.gov PMO

- Research Analyst works with PMO to resolve the issue.
- Typical escalations: Policy questions/System bugs/Training or Meeting Requests.

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. CSREES' Grants.gov Implementation Plans**

CSREES is continuing to develop its capacity to exchange proposal and grant data electronically with its grantees through [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) and to process, review, and award proposals and grants electronically.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2007, CSREES conducted a pilot on the submission of the SF-424 Mandatory application package through the Grants.gov website for the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program. The pilot was successful as all eligible grantees submitted their applications through Grants.gov.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 requires all Federal agencies to report monthly to a publicly-accessible website on all Federal assistance awards (including grants). This requirement became effective for all awards made in FY 2007 and thereafter.

As a result, for the FY 2008 (October 1, 2007-September 30, 2008) cycle, CSREES is requiring electronic submission through Grants.gov for all Federal assistance programs (i.e., grants). For

more information about CSREES' Grants.gov plans, including important announcements, program implementation details, and detailed requirements, see the CSREES' web site, [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/other\\_links/egov/egov.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/other_links/egov/egov.html). The information on these web sites will be updated as appropriate. It is suggested that the sites be visited periodically for important updates.

## **B. D-U-N-S® Number**

A D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. A Federal Register notice of final policy issuance (68 FR 38402) requires a D-U-N-S® number in every application (i.e., hard copy and electronic) for a grant or cooperative agreement (except applications from individuals) submitted on or after October 1, 2003. Therefore, potential applicants should verify that they have a D-U-N-S® number or take the steps needed to obtain one. For information about how to obtain a D-U-N-S® number go to <http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS>. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

## **C. Required Registration for Grants.gov**

The Central Contract Registry (CCR) is a database that serves as the primary Government repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with the Government. This database will also be used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for organizations seeking and receiving grants from the Government. Such organizations must register in the CCR prior to the submission of applications via grants.gov (a DUNS number is needed for CCR registration). For information about how to register in the CCR visit the "Get Started" section at <http://www.grants.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

APPENDIX A

FY 2008 Distribution of Funds to Eligible Institutions for Extension Activities  
Authorized under the Section 3 (b) and 3 (c) of the Smith-Lever Act

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

<u>State</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Grant Number</u>	<u>FY 2008 ALLOCATION</u>	<u>100% Matching Requirement</u>
Alabama	Tuskegee University	2008-41310-08902	\$ 23,085	\$ 23,085
Arizona	University of Arizona	2008-41310-00300	94,898	94,898
Arkansas	University of Arkansas	2008-41310-00400	76,498	76,498
California	University of California	2008-41310-00500	7,299	7,299
Colorado	Colorado State University	2008-41310-00600	49,587	49,587
Idaho	University of Idaho	2008-41310-01200	69,087	69,087
Iowa	Iowa State University	2008-41310-01300	238,459	238,459
Kansas	Kansas State University	2008-41310-01600	192,397	192,397
Kentucky	University of Kentucky	2008-41310-01700	91,266	91,266
Kentucky	Kentucky State University	2008-41310-08907	23,044	23,044
Maine	University of Maine	2008-41310-01900	28,614	28,614
Maryland	University of Maryland	2008-41310-02000	5,527	5,527
Minnesota	University of Minnesota	2008-41310-02300	533,943	533,943
Mississippi	Mississippi State University	2008-4131002400	24,616	24,616
Missouri	University of Missouri	2008-41310-02500	74,194	74,194
Montana	Montana State University	2008-41310-02600	38,122	38,122
Nevada	University of Nevada	2008-41310-02800	39,786	39,786
New Jersey	Rutgers University	2008-41310-03000	32,383	32,383
New Mexico	New Mexico State University	2008-41310-03100	77,189	77,189
New York	Cornell University	2008-41310-03200	560,122	560,122
North Carolina	North Carolina State University	2008-41310-03300	39,428	39,428
North Dakota	North Dakota State University	2008-41310-03400	40,064	40,064
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State University	2008-41310-03600	70,641	70,641
Oregon	Oregon State University	2008-41310-03700	136,143	136,143
Puerto Rico	University of Puerto Rico	2008-41310-03900	1,731	1,731
South Carolina	Clemson University	2008-41310-04100	26,806	26,806
South Dakota	South Dakota State University	2008-41310-04200	6,017	6,017
Tennessee	University of Tennessee	2008-41310-04300	485,078	485,078
Utah	Utah State University	2008-41310-04500	40,549	40,549
Vermont	University of Vermont	2008-41310-04600	61,276	61,276
Virginia	Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University	2008-41310-04700	70,705	70,705
Washington	Washington State University	2008-41310-04800	109,954	109,954
West Virginia	West Virginia University	2008-41310-04900	9,655	9,655
Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin	2008-41310-05000	13,271	13,271
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 3,391,434</b>	<b>\$ 3,391,434</b>