

2013 Guide  
**Research Applicants**

# About this Webinar:

- ❖ Overview of the RFA
- ❖ Application pitfalls
- ❖ Drilling down on the RFA
- ❖ Success Strategies
- ❖ Questions

# The 2013 Research RFA

- ❖ Due - February 14 5 pm EST - Thursday
- ❖ Funding Opportunity Number is:  
**USDA-NIFA-TCRGP-003993**
- ❖ 3 Research Options each with Different funding
- ❖ One Option per Application – No App Limit
- ❖ 1890 or 1862 Collaboration Required

# The 2013 Research RFA

- ❖ Three Support Documents are Required:
  - Stakeholder Input - page 13
  - 1862 LGU Collaboration Agreement
  - Tribal Entity Support Letter
- ❖ Indirect Costs – TCU Negotiated Rate or 30% - whichever is lower. Collaborator may take IDC
- ❖ TCU retention of Award Funds – Not in RFA
- ❖ One Option per Application – No App Limit
- ❖ 1890 or 1862 Collaboration Required

# Application Pitfalls

- ❖ Option Not Appropriate for TCU or Project Type
- ❖ No Actual Research – Extension Work
- ❖ PD not Hired Yet
- ❖ Poor 1862 Relationship – Shopping
- ❖ Clarity of Message – get help

# Application Pitfalls

- ❖ Literature Search & Bibliography – cite references in narrative and don't pack the bibliography
- ❖ Little or no Meaningful Student Involvement
- ❖ Relevance to Tribal or Stakeholder Issues – Why is this Research Important ?

# Application Pitfalls

**PDF are a must for all attachments. File names with certain characters will cause the **entire application to be rejected.****

Characters you may use:

- ✓ Alphabet characters - capital or lower-case
- ✓ Numeric characters – 0-9
- ✓ Underscore ( \_ )
- ✓ Hyphen ( - )
- ✓ Space ( )
- ✓ Period ( . )

**DON'T USE:** Apostrophe → Shaw's resume.pdf, Exclamation Point → 4-H fun!.pdf

**BEWARE:** Renaming files may not work

**BE AWARE:** Grants.gov is not compatible with Adobe Reader XI

# Application Pitfalls

- ❖ SAM is an acronym for “System for Award Management,” a new Federal web portal that will replace Central Contractor Registry (CCR).
- ❖ MUST have a current and correct SAM registration to submit proposals and manage grants for many federal agencies!
- ❖ If you have kept your CCR registration current the process is manageable
- ❖ Call Grants.gov help desk to help solve any problems  
1-800-518-4726

# New Requirement:

## Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

- ❖ Page 9 – study this section
- ❖ PD and Faculty need to develop at least the minimum as a training module
- ❖ 3 Areas –
  - Authorship & Plagiarism
  - Data and Research Integration
  - Reporting Misconduct

# New Requirement:

## Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

- ❖ Important for Student Development
- ❖ Good Opportunity for 1862 assistance especially for Student Research Experience
- ❖ <https://www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp>
- ❖ NIFA will work with FALCON to provide assistance

# 1862 Partnership Guidelines:

- ❖ The Collaborator may or may not be a Co-PD
- ❖ TCU may work with other institutions – in addition to the 1862 or an 1890
- ❖ Signed Agreement should be detailed (SOW, Budget, etc.)
- ❖ Level of 1862 involvement will vary with the type of option selected
- ❖ Ideally, relationship is professional, long-term, and of equal partnership
- ❖ Institutions/faculty are looking for funding sources - beware

# Choice of Research Option:

- ❖ Should be Driven by Level of Research Capacity at the TCU & type of Research Strategy pursued
- ❖ Funding Levels Vary Greatly
- ❖ Should be tied to TCU or Department Plan
- ❖ Different Options – Different Application Requirements and Review Evaluation
- ❖ 2012 Options varied in their competitiveness...

# Project Narrative:

# Narrative Sections:

- ❖ Institutional Research Plan:
- ❖ Research Statement of Inquiry:
- ❖ Research Project Design:
- ❖ Project Personnel & Management – Facilities:
- ❖ Project Evaluation:

# Institutional Research Plan:

- ❖ Provide Evidence – Reference existing Plan
- ❖ Can be part of College or Department Plan
- ❖ Center of Excellence – What does the TCU want to be know for and excel in ?
- ❖ Relationship to Land Grant & Education & Extension
- ❖ Institutional Mandate from Tribe or Stakeholders
  - Prepare students: next educational experience?

# Keys to an Effective Narrative:

Make your Choice of Option, Research Topic and Design

Fit into a Logical Flow that:

- Has an Identifiable Element of Discovery
- Has Broad Support and Addresses need
- Builds Institutional & Human Capacity
- Fits into Larger Educational Initiatives – Equity
- Demonstrates Real Collaboration
- Builds on past Research Work – if Applicable
- Addresses Existing Weaknesses

# Evaluation Plan:

- ❖ Page 20 – NIFA Suggestions – Present plan – no need to answer the questions listed
- ❖ May use Award Funds to outsource - OR:
- ❖ May use in-house expertise or the 1862 partner
- ❖ Keys –
  - was research capacity enhanced ?
  - was student research competency advanced ?
  - was a problem addressed of importance ?

# Visiting Scholar

- ❖ At the 1994 Land Grant's invitation, an 1890 or 1862 faculty member, extension expert or graduate student comes to the Tribal College Campus to teach, help design a research project or partner in some scientific capacity with the TCU.
- ❖ With Graduate students: PDs are Tribal College and Graduate student's advisor.
- ❖ An option on New Capacity Building Research Student Research Experience

# Panelists' Guide

Thinking like a reviewer

# Reviewer's Criteria:

Criteria
Research Plan and Statement of Inquiry
Research Project Design
Research Project Personnel and Management
Project Cost Effectiveness
Project Evaluation
Student Plan (In Student and Community Projects Only)

# Research Plan and Statement of Inquiry

- ❖ Is the overall institutional research plan sound?
- ❖ Is the statement of inquiry of good quality?
- ❖ Does the project increase the likelihood that the institution will conduct more research in the future?
- ❖ Does the proposal provide evidence that research is stakeholder driven?

# Research Project Design

- ❖ Is the application complete, well organized and well-written?
- ❖ Is there adequate evidence of an appropriate experimental design?
- ❖ Is there sufficient evidence of access to facilities and equipment?
- ❖ Has a literature search been done, and is it relevant?

# Research Project Personnel and Management

- ❖ Is there evidence of 1862 or 1890 partnership? (This is where your cooperative agreement matters)
- ❖ Is there adequate documentation of partnership as required in the RFA? (see above)
- ❖ Has the Tribal or Reservation government been consulted, and have they provided a signed letter of support?
- ❖ Is there a logical and adequate timeline?

# Budget and Evaluation

- ❖ Is the budget free of math errors and adequate to complete the project?
- ❖ Is the budget narrative descriptive enough to explain and justify the costs?
- ❖ Is there an evaluation plan and funds to support the plan?
- ❖ Is the evaluation methodology appropriate and data-based?

# Student Plan

- ❖ Are students involved in the project within their abilities?
- ❖ Will students acquire knowledge and skills that improve their scientific literacy?
- ❖ Will students wishing to pursue a career in the sciences gain experience to help them in the classroom, in internships and in their career?

# Success Strategies

## No Lose Ends

- ❖ MIA: Narrative sings the praises of a visiting scholar, but forgets her resume. A bibliography lists a key study, one that makes the case for funding, but the narrative never even mentions it. The project builds on previously funded research that was a huge success—unmentioned in the narrative.
- ❖ Assume nothing: The reviewer may be an expert in the scientific area of your proposal, but what you forget to tell about your project, they never learn. Many good proposals fail this way.
- ❖ Link research back to need: Give details on the activities to be done and always link them back to the original reason for the project—a need in Indian Country.

# Success Strategies

## Show, Don't Tell

- ❖ Use State and Federal data where appropriate. Consider using the US Census, USDA's Census of Agriculture (Survey of Indian Country in 2007) or data from the Center for Disease Control. Check out this NIFA tutorial:  
<http://nifa-connect.nifa.usda.gov/research/>
- ❖ Ideas from peer-reviewed journals – articles can support effectiveness of proposed plan. Journal of Extension is a good starting place:  
<http://www.joe.org/>
- ❖ Include any literature and referenced information in narrative and bibliography. If not referenced in narrative – do not include it in the bibliography.

# Success Strategies

## Be Scientifically Aware

- ❖ Don't use pop culture terms or concepts that sound more like advertising. Be especially careful when talking about health claims.
- ❖ If you are studying a crop for agriculture make sure the species is adaptable to your region. If that is the research question to be addressed – indicate this.
- ❖ Don't forget IRB and environmental impact statements if you need them.
- ❖ Address research safety protocols - students

# Success Strategies

## Business Links? Use Caution!

- ❖ Research findings may anticipate economic opportunity for Indian Country.
- ❖ The risk is that reviewers may get distracted by the business aspects of the application and lose site of the research project.
- ❖ This could be an opportunity for the TCU Extension Office or for other grant opportunities.
- ❖ Participatory Research with farmers and ranchers is an acceptable method – it is a way to introduce existing knowledge into unique Indian Country situations

# Success Strategies

## Try To Be Goof Proof

- ❖ Have your application draft read by others.
- ❖ Cut and Paste—be careful. RFA language is good but it needs to be explained and customized to your narrative.
- ❖ Don't make a Genus or species error. Watch technical terms, including spelling.

# Success Strategies

## Budget Well

- ❖ The Budget Narrative is your opportunity to explain \$ amounts in line items.
- ❖ Make sure each part of the project, can be done with the money you have budgeted.
- ❖ Make sure instruments requested in the budget fit this research project and explain why you need them in the Project and Budget Narratives
- ❖ Each sub-award recipient needs a budget. No exceptions

# Success Strategies

## Other Hints

- ❖ Project PD – should be on-board from inception
- ❖ Make sure reference articles support the narrative. Be careful about overstating and remember that Reviewers often check bibliographies.
- ❖ Choose projects that you know your institution can do in a leadership capacity. If you don't have the expertise to do part of the project, acknowledging that and bringing someone into the grant who can do the work is a plus.
- ❖ Don't forget NIFA goals in the RFA. Don't stretch the project to meet a goal, and don't think you have to cover all of them. If, however, the project is a good fit with one—make note of it.



# Q & A

