



## **NEW INNOVATOR IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AWARD**

### **PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR) invites **current nominees** to its New Innovator in Food and Agriculture Research Award to submit applications. With this program, FFAR intends to support and promote the future generation of exceptionally talented and creative new faculty who are conducting critical research and establishing research programs that will lead to expanded availability of food and facilitate the global practice of sustainable agriculture as the world's population grows to more than 9 billion people by the year 2050. With this award, FFAR seeks to promote career advancement of highly creative and promising new scientists who intend to make a long-term career commitment to research in food and agriculture and bring innovative, ground-breaking research initiatives and thinking to bear on problems facing food and agriculture.

Within the scope of the New Innovator program, investigators will have the freedom to explore new avenues of inquiry that arise during the course of their research. Therefore, FFAR is interested in the program of research to be explored and its impact as opposed to a list of very specific aims. It is expected that through this program investigators will have the ability to pursue highly creative ideas, to firmly establish their early lines of research into important food and agriculture scientific areas and provide stability in funding during their critical early career years by reducing the time spent on writing applications.

FFAR anticipates naming no more than a total of **ten awards** within the following Target Areas of Research:

- Optimizing Agricultural Water Use
- Transforming Soil Health
- Enhancing Sustainable Farm Animal Productivity, Resilience, and Health
- Improving Plant Efficiency
- Achieving a Deeper Understanding of Nutrition and Healthful Food Choices
- Managing Food Production Systems to Enhance Nutritional Outcomes
- Spurring Food System Innovation

#### **1) Eligible Institutions**

- U.S. Institutions of Higher Education
  - Public/state controlled institutions of higher education

- Private institutions of higher education
- U.S. Nonprofit Research Institutions other than Institutions of Higher Education
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

In keeping with FFAR goals to reach a diverse and broad range of institutions and individuals who participate in its programs, the following types of higher education institutions are always encouraged to apply for FFAR programs:

- Hispanic-serving Institutions
- 1890s Land Grant Institutions and other Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Tribal Colleges and Universities
- Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions
- Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions

## 2) Eligible Individuals

Only faculty who have been nominated by their institution and have received an invitation to submit an application are eligible. These nominees are members at eligible institutions with the creative ideas, skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research program as Principal Investigator. Faculty member must have been hired on or after **August 1, 2013**, for his or her tenure-track or equivalent position and may work in any discipline or any department within the organization. Preference will be given to individuals near the onset of their independent research career and who are within eight years of receiving a Ph.D. or equivalent degree. Individuals with significant research experience prior to obtaining their faculty position will not be considered.

## 3) Application Due Date:

**Deadline to submit an application is 11:59 PM EST on April 21, 2017.**

Nominees may submit applications only after they have received an invitation through the online application process.

# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

## A. GETTING STARTED WITH proposalCENTRAL

As a nominee for the New Innovator in Food and Agriculture Research you have received an invitation with login information for access to proposalCENTRAL at:

<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>

Using the credentials supplied to you, log in using the Application Login fields. Once logged in, you will find your invitation listed under their blue “Manage Proposals” area where you can click the “edit” button to open, complete, save and submit the application.

If you have difficulties registering, logging in, or creating your application, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Support:  
Toll-free U.S. and Canada (1-800) 875-2562

## B. APPLICATION FORMAT

The following information is required to submit a complete application. Numbers correspond to the application sections that appear on the left side of the online application.

1. **Title Page.** Enter the title of the research program. The title is limited to 75 characters in length (including spaces). Use the Dropdown menu to select the FFAR Research Topic Area to which your research program is most closely related.
2. **Download Program Guidelines and Application Instructions.** These Program Guidelines and Application Instructions can be downloaded from this section. Click the “Download” button to save on your computer.
3. **Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal.** Optional. This section allows you to give other users access to your grant application, with varying levels of permissions. Please work with institutional officials to determine if access is needed by your institution’s Office of Sponsored Research (or equivalent central research administration office) in order to process your application.
4. **Principal Investigator.** Enter information for the applicant. If you currently have an established profile in proposalCENTRAL it should appear and allow you to update as necessary.

5. **Institution & Contacts.** Enter information regarding the lead institution and Signing Official. Institutional signing officials who currently are registered with proposalCENTRAL should be listed. If the signing official is not listed, you may add the name and contact information using the “Add” button.
6. **Key Personnel.** Enter information regarding any collaborators, postdocs, graduate students or others personnel who are central to your program of research. You may choose to leave this section blank if no collaborators are involved, if the individuals are yet to be named, or for other reasons.
7. **Abstract and Key Words.** Enter a brief technical description of the program of research, including the significance for advancing food and agricultural sciences and/or applying results to real world issues, how the research is innovative, and the relevance to FFAR’s mission and research topic areas. Please note that your answer is limited to 250 words or about a half page.
8. **Budget Summary.** Enter direct research expenses per budget period in the categories presented. Please remember that FFAR will award each applicant up to \$100,000 per year for three years with an additional \$100,000 required cash match from a non-federal source for a total award of up to \$600,000. The Budget in Section 8 should not exceed a total award of \$600,000. Applicants may ask for a longer duration award provided total funds do not exceed \$600,000. If a four or five year award is requested, “Period 4 and 5” should be filled out. PLEASE NOTE that indirect costs (F&A) are limited to 10 percent of the **Total Award** and thus must be included as part of the \$600,000 budget limit. Construction and renovation costs are not permitted. Salaries of principal investigators are may be included for time not covered by institutional or other grant funds and effort should be commensurate with the research proposed.

Provide a budget justification in the space provided (explain and justify major personnel requirements, equipment purchases, unusual supply requests or other costs needing explanation).

*Note on matching:* If awarded, FFAR will require a more detailed description from the awarded institution of the matching funds, which must equal the FFAR contribution. Matching must be from a non-federal source and may not come from funds already designated for other purposes. For example, a faculty member’s start-up package that was developed through employment negotiations may not be redirected to cover the match. In-kind matching is not permissible.

9. **Current and Pending Support.** Add any research support that you have obtained or is currently under consideration by a funder. Support includes all financial resources, whether federal, non-federal, commercial or institutional, available in direct support of an

individual's research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and/or institutional awards. Training awards, prizes, or gifts need not be included.

**10. Organization Assurances.** Indicate whether the proposed project involves Human Subjects and/or Vertebrate Animals. If your study involves Human Subjects, indicate the status of IRB approval and the date of approval (if approval is pending, enter date the request was submitted). If your study involves Vertebrate Animals, indicate the status of IACUC approval and the date of approval (if approval is pending, enter date the request was submitted). The assurances/certifications are made and verified by the signature of the institutional official signing the "Certification and Acceptance of Terms" form. If a grant is awarded, documentation of IRB and/or IACUC approval (if applicable) must be submitted upon request.

**11. Research Program Plan and Application Components.** Attach the eight components of the application described below. All attachments are required to use the following formatting to provide for consistency among applicants in the amount of content provided.

- Use an Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger.
- Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch. Type may be no more than six lines per inch. Use standard paper size (8 ½" x 11"). Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. No information should appear in the margins.

**A. Research Program Plan (4 pages).** Please describe the program of research. Include:

- Background on areas of research and key gaps in scientific understanding or important challenges to be addressed through the overall program of research.
- Significance of the program, its potential impact and the alignment of the significance with FFAR goals.
- Description of recent progress by the PI.
- Overview of future research program. This should be a description of the key questions or challenges the PI plans to address and the general strategies that might be used to approach them. The focus should be on the importance of the questions or challenges. A detailed experimental plan is not expected.

**B. Figures, Tables and Graphics.** Attach only those figures, tables or graphics that are required to support the proposed research program described above. This section should not be used to circumvent the page limitation of the Research Program Plan section.

- C. Literature Cited. Provide a bibliography of any literature cited in the Research Plan. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. Make sure that only bibliographic citations are included. Be especially careful to follow scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the application.
  - D. Personal Statement (1 page). Use your personal statement to explain how your expertise and training links to your research program and positions you to be the best candidate to pursue this particular research program, strengths you bring to the project beyond your list of positions and qualifications, how this program of research will advance your research career, and how your proposed research would align with FFAR's values. The personal statement is an opportunity to state and demonstrate your commitment to: **diversifying the research workforce; mentoring the next generation of agricultural researchers; and catalyzing innovation** (explain specifically how this proposed research program is not simply an extension of current work).
  - E. Letters of support. Attach letters of support only when necessary to confirm the participation of collaborators or others who are providing needed expertise, convey enthusiasm for the applicant and their research, or are otherwise contributing resources to the program of research. Including more letters of support than necessary does not increase an applicant's chances of receiving the award.
  - F. Biosketch (2 page excluding publications). The biographical sketch should include a presentation of academic and research credentials, as applicable (e.g., earned degrees, teaching experience, employment history, professional activities, honors and awards, products, grants received, synergistic activities).
  - G. Publications. Limit publications to no more than 10 based on recentness, importance to the field, relevance to the proposed research and/or significance to your career.
  - H. Signature Pages. See Step 13 to print Signature Pages for later upload to this section.
- 12. Validate.** Validate the application on proposalCENTRAL. This is an essential step that checks for required data and attachments. You will not be able to submit your application without all of the required information. An application that has not been validated cannot be submitted.
- 13. Signature Page(s)** After successfully passing the validation check, you may click "Print Signature Pages" to create cover page/signature pages, which can be forwarded for signature by the institutional signing official. Once signed, signature pages should be

uploaded into: “11. Research Program Plan and Application Components Section H Signature Pages (s).” To see the entire application, click “Print Signature Page(s) and Attached PDF files.”

**14. Submit.** Once you have clicked the “Submit” button, an email will be sent to you confirming your submission.

## **C. REVIEW CRITERIA**

Each application will reviewed for:

- Novelty, innovation, and originality.
- Potential to advance food and agriculture science within the FFAR target areas and impact agricultural production, products, health, and/or sustainability.
- Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility.
- Potential for research results/outcomes to be implemented in practice.
- Qualifications of project personnel and adequacy of facilities:
  - The PI has the proper background, skills and/or experience to conduct the research.
  - The PI has the potential for future accomplishments and this research forms the foundation for a successful career in agricultural sciences.
  - The PI is committed and able to be an excellent mentor and supports diversity within his or her program.
  - The facilities and institutional support are appropriate to conduct the research.

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