

International Consortium for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Agriculture (ICASA) 2026 Request for Applications

Key Dates

Pre-Application Opens: May 20, 2026, at 12 p.m. EDT

Informational Webinar: May 26, 2026 at 1:00 pm EDT

Pre-Application Due: June 10, 2026 by 5 p.m. EDT

Note: An approved pre-application with an invitation to submit a full application is required for submission.

Full Application Invitation: July 15, 2026 by 5 p.m. EDT

Full Application Informational Webinar: August 18, 2026 at 12 p.m. EDT

Full Application Due: September 2, 2026, by 5 p.m. EDT

Award Notification: Early 2027

Anticipated Project Start Date: May to October 2027

I. Program Overview

The [International Consortium for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Agriculture](#) (ICASA) was established by the [Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research](#) in 2019 to fund antimicrobial research to promote targeted antibiotic use, advance animal health and welfare and increase transparency in food production practices in the U.S. beef and swine sectors. Participants and additional project-level partners matched FFAR funds, resulting in a total investment of \$15 million to fund 31 research projects to advance antimicrobial stewardship.



In 2025, FFAR and several partners recommitted to ICASA to fund research that continues advancing antimicrobial stewardship in the U.S. beef and swine sectors. This renewed effort aims to promote healthier livestock by investing in practical solutions, such as new technologies and management practices, that promote judicious antibiotic use, produce healthier beef cattle and swine and improve animal welfare. **This request for applications (RFA) reflects ICASA’s continued commitment to advancing antimicrobial stewardship in the U.S. beef and swine industries.**

FFAR funds pre-competitive, hypothesis-driven research to fill critical gaps in the food and agriculture sector. More information about [FFAR’s Priority Areas](#) and [Research Strategy](#) is available on the FFAR website.

II. Application Requirements

Research Areas Supported

All applications submitted should focus on beef, swine or cross-sector priorities. All pre-applications must **clearly identify** which of the research area priorities and sub classification(s) your research question will address (e.g. beef sector priority 3.b or cross-cutting priority 1.c).

Beef sector priorities:

1. Advance immune response to infectious diseases that may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Vaccination
 - b. Immune modulators
 - c. Targeted-use of antibiotics
2. Examine genomic strategies for disease that may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD)
 - b. Heart failure
3. Examine production and management systems across cow-calf, dairy, calf ranch, backgrounder, feedyard and/or packer/processor sectors to advance:
 - a. Reduced liver abscess incidence
 - b. Health and welfare in beef x dairy systems, including mitigation of disease
 - c. Cull dairy or beef cow management practices

Swine sector priorities:

1. Advance the National Pork Board [National Swine Health Strategy](#) initiatives by addressing research gaps in antimicrobial stewardship to reduce the impact of

domestic diseases, that may include but are not limited to controlling and/or reducing:

- a. Enteric bacterial pathogens
- b. Disease prevalence driving antibiotic use
2. Characterize antibiotic use in the U.S. swine herd
3. Develop and evaluate strategies to improve adoption of antimicrobial stewardship practices across stakeholders

Cross-cutting priorities:

1. Examine system-level drivers of antimicrobial stewardship across animal agriculture, including:
 - a. Human behavior, decision-making processes and implementation practices, with an interest in root cause analysis of drivers of antimicrobial use
 - b. Production system dynamics' impact on animal health and welfare across management systems (e.g. implications of maternal stress on disease prevalence throughout production phases)
 - c. Innovative or retrofitted housing systems that impact animal health and welfare
 - d. One Health evaluation of environmental release and waste pathways and their impact on disease transmission and/or antimicrobial resistance
 - e. Technology solutions to build consumer trust and maintain production efficiency through improved measurement, transparency and/or traceability of farm-level data, particularly through the application of machine learning-driven approaches

Additional Guidance to Applicants

Applicants are **highly encouraged** to address the following elements in submitted pre-applications, if applicable:

- Collaboration that demonstrates industry partnerships
- Background information to support the feasibility and technical merit of the proposed work
- Clear strategies for translating innovations from controlled research environments into real-world, scalable U.S. beef or swine production systems
- Additional project components such as an economic analysis related to the proposed research question, animal welfare implications, environmental impacts and/or the relevance to structural industry changes over time



- Dissemination plans to end users via a commercialization strategy, knowledge sharing, outreach and Extension

Research Areas Not Supported

ICASA will not consider the following applications:

- Research that is not directly relevant to the U.S. beef and swine sectors

All research must be conducted in accordance with standard research compliance requirements, such as approval from the relevant Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or similar. If human subjects are involved, the research team should be trained in culturally appropriate methods to reach the target population and must have Institutional Review Board (IRB) or equivalent for the project.

III. Eligibility

FFAR welcomes applications from all domestic and international higher education institutions, nonprofit and for-profit organizations and government-affiliated research agencies. Multiple applications from the same institution are allowed.

Any individual(s) with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to perform the proposed research as Principal Investigator(s) may apply through their home institution or organization. A documented funding risk assessment will be conducted before any potential award can be made to selected startup companies conditionally selected for an award. Multiple applications from the same institution are allowed.

To be eligible, the proposed research must be relevant to the U.S. beef or swine industries.

IV. Funding Availability & Award Information

Projects may request ICASA funds of USD \$100,000 - \$500,000 per proposed project. There is no maximum on the amount of matching funds that may be included in the total budget. Projects with durations of 18 to 36 months in length are eligible for funding. Project start dates range from May to October 2027. Successful projects will receive annual disbursements contingent upon meeting reporting requirements (see Section VIII).



Key budget considerations are noted below, and additional budgetary guidelines can be found on [FFAR's website](#). Applicants are encouraged to contact [FFAR's Grants Team](#) to discuss any concerns.

- **Matching funds are required for this funding opportunity.**
 - Applicants must provide matching funds equal to at least 40% of the total project budget (e.g., for a total project budget of \$750,000, matching funds of at least \$300,000 are required for a \$450,000 request of ICASA funds).
 - Matching funds must meet FFAR's [Matching Funds Guidelines](#), noting that they cannot be from a U.S. federal government entity.
 - No more than 50% of the required match may be in-kind contributions.
 - Funds already committed as a match or dedicated to another project cannot be offered as a match. Matching funds must correspond to project costs in the budget justification.
 - Applications that demonstrate strong partnerships by matching from external sources outside the applicant institutions are encouraged. These partners may include but are not limited to the private sector, nonprofits, commodity and trade groups, state governments and others that do not traditionally work in agriculture.
- Tuition cannot be charged as a direct cost for ICASA awards.
- ICASA funds cannot be used for building construction and/or commercial scaling.
- A maximum of 15% of total direct costs may be used for indirect costs (IDC). Please see FFAR's [Indirect Costs Policy](#) for more details.
- Reasonable budgets work in favor of the applicant. Budgets that are not commensurate with the proposed work or poorly justified will negatively affect the overall evaluation of the application.

V. Application Components

All applicants must submit their application through FFAR's online Grant Management System.

Pre-Application

Required Components

- Organization Information
 - Organization Personnel
 - Authorized Official Representative (AOR)
 - Grant/Contact Administrator

- Contact Information
 - Principal Investigator (PI)
 - Key personnel, including affiliation, expertise and project role
- Application Information
 - Proposed project title (up to 50 words)
 - Key words (up to 20 words)
 - Project duration (months)
 - Proposed project geographic location(s)
 - Brief project abstract (up to 250 words)
 - One sentence description of the question your project aims to answer (up to 250 characters)
 - Proposed project description (up to 2,500 words)
 - Which research area priorities (beef, swine, cross-cutting) will this project address (e.g. beef sector priority 3.b or cross-cutting priority 1.c)? (up to 500 words)
 - What challenge or existing paradigm is the project addressing? What are the underlying research hypotheses? (up to 500 words)
 - How will the project address the stated challenge and advance understanding of an understudied research topic or information gap (e.g., describe the research strategy including methods)? (up to 500 words)
 - What innovative outcomes will the project generate? Describe how the project will address challenges to the U.S. beef or swine sectors and outline the impact pathway on antimicrobial stewardship. Describe the anticipated pathway to impact, including how research outcomes will be used, adopted, extended or commercialized. (up to 500 words)
 - Why is ICASA ideally positioned to fund this project and how does the project align with the ICASA vision? (up to 500 words)

ICASA Vision: Producing healthier livestock:
ICASA’s investment in research creates practical solutions, such as new technologies and management practices, that promote judicious antibiotic use, produce healthier beef cattle and swine and improve animal welfare.
- Budget Details
 - Total proposed budget (ICASA Funds + Match)
 - ICASA Funds (maximum request of 60% of the budget total)
 - Required Match Funds (minimum of 40% of the budget total)

- Match Information
 - List any match funding partners and indicate if the partners' contributions are secured, still under discussion or **potential**. Unsecured match does not impact eligibility of pre-applications.

Optional Attachments

- Additional key personnel

Full Application

Required Components

- Organization Information
 - Organization Personnel
 - Authorized Official Representative (AOR)
 - Grant/Contract Administrator
 - Press Contact
 - Governmental/Legislative Contact, if applicable
 - Technology Transfer Contact, if applicable
- Contact Information
 - Principal Investigator (PI)
 - Key personnel, including affiliation, expertise and project role
- Application Information
 - Project title (up to 50 words)
 - Project duration (months)
 - Geographic location(s) (country and nearest city; for US locations, state and congressional district where the proposed research will be conducted)
 - Keywords (up to 20 words)
 - Project abstract (up to 250 words)
 - One sentence description of the question your project aims to answer (up to 250 characters)
 - Project description and approach (up to 5,250 words)
 - Background information and justification for the proposed research (up to 2,500 words)
 - Clearly stated research question and associated hypothesis (up to 250 words)
 - Detailed description of the research plan, methodologies and methods (up to 2,500 words)
 - Project outputs and outcomes (up to 500 words)

- Description of how the proposed research builds upon existing knowledge or related research projects and how the research results will be impactful in the U.S. beef or swine sector and outline the impact pathway on antimicrobial stewardship (up to 500 words)
- Description of pathway(s) to adoption, scalability and/or commercialization if applicable, in the U.S. beef or swine industry and potential barriers to adoption or regulatory obstacles and how those barriers or obstacles will be addressed (up to 500 words)
- Data management plan (up to 500 words)
- Gantt chart outlining the project timeline by quarterly intervals and listing activities for each objective. Outline and brief description of the project objectives and activities included in the Gantt chart as well as anticipated outputs (e.g., workshops, report releases, publications, etc.) for each objective. See FFAR's [narrative report template](#) for additional guidance. Please use the following format for your description:
 - Objective 1
 - Activity 1.1
 - Activity 1.2
 - Anticipated Output 1.1
 - Anticipated Output 1.2
 - Objective 2
 - Activity 2.1
 - Activity 2.2
 - Anticipated Output 2.1
 - Anticipated Output 2.2
 - Etc.
- Budget Details
 - Total proposed budget (ICASA Funds + Match)
 - ICASA Funds (maximum request of 60% of the budget total)
 - Required Match Funds (minimum of 40% of the budget total)
 - Budget overview and justification (up to 1,000 words)
- Match Information
 - Total matching contributions
 - Matching funder information
- Intellectual property management plan, if applicable, in accordance with the [FFAR IP Policy](#) (up to 500 words)
- Organizational assurances (IACUC)

Required Attachments

Templates* for FFAR forms can be found on the [Grants Resources section](#) of the FFAR website. Failure to provide these attachments will result in the application's disqualification.

- Budget Form*
- Matching Funds Contribution Letter(s) (see [FFAR's Matching Funds Contribution Letter Template](#))
- Current and Pending Support* (required for PI and Key Personnel)
- Gantt chart
- References cited (will not count towards project description word limit)
- PI and Key Personnel Bio-sketches (five-page limit per individual)

Optional Attachments

- Additional Key Personnel
- Supporting figures, tables, graphics or equations (will not count towards Project Narrative word limit)
- Matching Funds Contribution Letter(s) (see FFAR's Matching Funds Contribution Letter Template*)
- Letters of Support. Applicants may provide letters of institutional, collaborator or stakeholder support for the proposed project. Please combine all letters of support into a single PDF document before uploading as an attachment.

VI. How to Apply

All applications must be submitted by the deadline date through FFAR's online application Grant Management System. Applications submitted outside of this System will not be considered. If you already have an account, you may [start a new application](#). If you are a new user, register for an account by clicking the "Create Account" button located under the Sign In button on the bottom right side of the page.

Once you log in, you may begin working on your application. Please be sure to save your work often. To access a saved application, please do so through your [Grant Management Account](#).

To be fair to all our applicants, FFAR will not grant extensions to applicants who missed the deadlines posted in the Key Dates section.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with the guidelines stated in this RFA. Pre-applications must demonstrate the potential to meet the evaluation criteria. Full applications will then be evaluated on the following criteria:

Relevance, Novelty & Innovation (15%)

- Does the project address a challenge related to the U.S. beef or swine industries and ICASA's vision?
- Does the application adequately describe the novelty or innovation of the research?

Technical Merit & Feasibility (35%)

- Does the proposal clearly outline feasible goals, objectives and a work plan to evaluate an explicitly stated hypothesis?
- Does the application include effective, efficient and feasible methods to accomplish the project goals?
- Does the project team include the appropriate and adequate expertise and access to the appropriate facilities and equipment to implement the project work plan?
- Does the application include a clear and comprehensive data management plan that includes making data open and accessible to the public?
- Is the budget consistent with and justified by the proposed work plan?
- Are proposed equipment purchases justified and directly relevant to the proposed research?

Anticipated Outcomes & Impacts (30%)

- Does the proposal clearly outline the objectives and a plan for tracking progress and measuring success for each objective?
- Is the project likely to provide a significant benefit to the U.S. beef or swine production system?
- Will the results be relevant to the U.S. food and agriculture sector beyond the project's boundaries?
- Does the application emphasize adoption, scalability or commercial potential and present a compelling and viable plan for disseminating or advancing the project outcomes within the U.S. food and agriculture system?
- Does the application adequately address pathways and/or barriers to adoption or commercialization, including any regulatory obstacles, regarding the proposed project?

Partnerships (20%)

- Does the research team and/or funding partners represent a compelling collaboration?
- Does the research team have a plan to engage relevant stakeholders along the value chain, addressing **FFAR's commitment** to leveraging public-private partnerships?
- Does the application identify how/why ICASA is uniquely positioned to fund this project?

VIII. Award Administration

Review Process

Pre-Application Review

Submitted pre-applications undergo an internal review by the ICASA Executive Committee to assess consortium fit, relevance to the RFA and demonstrated potential to meet the evaluation criteria. Applicants deemed to have significant potential to advance ICASA's vision will be invited to submit a full application. **Applicants must submit a pre-application to be eligible to submit a full application.**

Full Application Review

Full applications undergo a two-stage peer review process, including primary and secondary review. Applications will be assessed based on reviewer feedback and alignment with program objectives and FFAR's research portfolio. FFAR and the ICASA Executive Committee will then review positive funding recommendations and make final selection decisions.

All peer reviewers must agree and adhere to the terms outlined in FFAR's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), [Non-Disclosure Agreement](#), and [Peer Review AI Policy](#). FFAR makes reasonable efforts to ensure applications are not assigned to reviewers with a real or apparent conflict with the applicant, institution or project personnel. Reviewers with a conflict of interest are recused from evaluating or participating in related discussions. All reviews are conducted confidentially.



Award Administration

Selection Notice

Following the full application review process, the PI and Authorized Organization Representative listed on the project will be officially notified by email of the Intent to Fund status of the application by FFAR's Grants Management Team. If an application is selected for funding, FFAR reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary. Following notification of selection, the applicant must submit the Intent to Fund forms, which can be found on [FFAR's website](#). The grant agreement process with FFAR includes formalizing the terms and conditions of the award. This process also involves institutional review and approval, confirmation of budget allocations, project milestones, reporting requirements and compliance with FFAR's policies. Once both parties execute the agreement, the project may begin, and funding is disbursed according to the agreed-upon schedule.

Requirement to Demonstrate Matching Funds

Matching funds are required for this funding opportunity. Applicants must provide matching funds equal to at least 40% of the total project budget (e.g., for a total budget of \$750,000, matching funds of at least \$300,000 are required for a \$450,000 request of ICASA funds). If selected for funding, the grantee will be required to certify matching funds before disbursement of award funds. The match share is intended to supplement, not supplant existing funding for the PI. The applicant must abide by FFAR's [Matching Funds Guidelines](#) to meet FFAR's matching requirements. To constitute a valid match, all matching funds on an ICASA grant must be expended during the grant period.

Post-Award Management

Annual Reporting Requirements

After FFAR confers a grant, the grantee must provide annual Narrative, Indicator and Financial Status reports within 30 days after the end of each funding year. Annual reports should include an accounting of actual vs planned activities performed, budget expenses incurred under the grant, any changes to the workplan and budget and highlights of project accomplishments (e.g., publications and other communications). Startup companies selected for funding will also be required to submit a semi-annual Financial Status report. Please see FFAR's [Annual & Final Reporting Requirements](#) for more details. Submission and approval of the annual report is required before the subsequent grant payment is released by FFAR.



Final Report Requirements

Within 90 days of project completion, the grantee is required to provide a final project report. This report should address the project objectives outlined in the original grant application, describe any modifications to the project objectives and scope, describe the final project accomplishments and include an impact report and a final financial expenditure report. Please see FFAR's [Annual & Final Reporting Requirements](#) for more details. Submission and approval of the final report is required before the final grant payment is released by FFAR.

Scientific Integrity

FFAR's ability to pursue its mission to build unique partnerships to support innovative science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges depends on the integrity of the science on which it relies. A fundamental purpose of FFAR is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of science to address challenges related to FFAR's mission. All FFAR grants must be conducted with the highest standards of scientific integrity.

IX. Application Assistance

For questions related to the online submission system, please contact FFAR's Grants Management team at grants@foundationfar.org. FFAR's Grants Office Hours are held the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 12 p.m. EDT. Registration for office hours can be done on [FFAR's website](#).

For questions related to the Scientific Program, please contact Dr. Miriam Martin LeValley at icasa@foundationfar.org.

FFAR strives to respond to inquiries within two business days, but our response time depends on the volume of questions received and the complexity of the questions asked. Please note that we do not monitor mailboxes on evenings, weekends or federal holidays.