

USDA - Agricultural Research Service
Faculty Research Fellowships
for Capacity Building at
1890 Land-Grant Universities

FY 2016 Program Information –
Second Offering

Application Deadline: May 13, 3016

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United States Agricultural
Department of Research
Agriculture Service

Program Description

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is committed to enhancing the agricultural research capacity of the 1890s Land-Grant Universities (LGUs) by partnering with them in a new program that offers research and training opportunities to career-track faculty at 1890 LGUs through the award of faculty research fellowships. Each 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship award will provide up to \$100,000 to support expenses (e.g., salary, living expenses, and research costs) for a Fellow during a 6 to 12-month residence at an ARS laboratory to conduct cooperative research with ARS. ARS will invest up to \$500,000 each year and no more than one fellowship will be made per institution per year. This is the second offering of this program for Fiscal Year 2016. One award was made during the first round and, accordingly, \$400,000 is available for this second offering.

The 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship program will provide mutual benefits to the 1890 LGUs and ARS. 1890 LGU faculty will have the opportunity to work alongside ARS scientists in established research programs, develop new research skills and techniques, co-author research papers from successful collaborative research, and demonstrate increased capacity to develop scientifically competitive research. ARS scientists will benefit from bringing new, talented partners into our research programs and establishing new collaborative research with 1890 LGUs. The LGU-ARS research partners may identify opportunities to develop more long-term funding ideas to sustain their research relationships beyond the term of the Fellowship.

ARS will accept applications from faculty at any of the 1890s LGUs. A maximum of three applications may be submitted by each 1890 LGU per competition. The application will be co-authored by:

- A career-track 1890 LGU faculty member that:
 - Has been employed for a minimum of five years in their current position, and
 - Is approved for a fellowship leave by his/her home institution; and
- An ARS scientist who:
 - Will be the Fellow's research cooperator and host,
 - Is the Research Leader (RL) of the host unit (although other ARS scientists may participate through their RL) who successfully completed the prescribed probationary period and is in good standing relative to performance,
 - Has adequate facilities and other resources needed to host the 1890 LGU faculty member, and
 - Has worked with the 1890 LGU faculty member to identify a research project that is complementary and relevant to their base funded research.

ARS is USDA's chief scientific in-house research agency and conducts research to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and provide information access and dissemination to:

- Ensure high-quality, safe food, and other agricultural products;

- Assess the nutritional needs of Americans;
- Sustain a competitive agricultural economy;
- Enhance the natural resource base and the environment and
- Provide economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society as a whole.

The ARS web site (www.ars.usda.gov) is a valuable resource for 1890 LGU scientists in identifying ARS research projects and locations of interest.

Successful applications will:

- Propose innovative research on some aspect of agriculture or food relevant to ARS' mission and programs,
- Have potential benefits and impact for the citizens of the 1890 LGU's state and beyond,
- Strengthen the expertise and research capacity being brought to the project by the 1890 LGU applicant, and
- Enhance the scope or impact of the ARS host scientist's research project.

Funds will be awarded for successful applicants by the addition of funds to the ARS host RL's research project. The host RL will then establish a Non-Assistance Cooperative Agreement (NACA) with the 1890 LGU to finalize the agreement for the full amount of the fellowship leave. The fellowship leave may not exceed one year in duration.

The 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship must begin no later than September 1, 2016.

Application and Submission Instructions

Proposals are submitted internally through ARS; there is not a Grants.gov application. An application must be developed jointly by the interested career-track 1890 LGU faculty member and his/her prospective ARS RL host and submitted by the RL's Area Director. All applications must include the following:

- A 3-5 page application narrative organized according to the following outline:
 1. The objectives of the work to be done by the 1890 LGU faculty member during their fellowship leave;
 2. The materials and methods required to accomplish the proposed research;
 3. The resources currently available at the ARS location to support the proposed research;
 4. The expected outputs and impacts of the proposed research;
 5. The benefits of the proposed cooperative research to U.S. agriculture, the 1890 LGU, ARS, and to the parent ARS CRIS project; and
 6. A description of how the 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship will enhance the capabilities of the applicant including the accomplishment of future research goals.

This narrative should be used as the Statement of Work (SOW) for the NACA with a minimum of alteration.

- A letter from the authorized official of the 1890 LGU that:
 - Grants approval of submission of the application and of the proposed research;

- Describes the particular arrangements at the 1890 LGU with respect to salary and date and duration of the fellowship leave;
 - Recognizes the full-time nature of the fellowship leave including agreement that the 1890 LGU faculty member will be conducting the research at the ARS location and thus will be minimally engaged in their normal faculty duties; and
 - Stipulates that the application is approved as one of no more than three applications from the 1890 LGU to this program for FY 2016.
- The Curriculum Vitae of the 1890 LGU faculty member.
 - A REE-454 budget spreadsheet, which will be used as part of an ensuing NACA.
 - Requested funds may not exceed \$100,000 and can be used to support:
 - The 1890 LGU faculty member's salary and benefits;
 - Travel to and from and residence expenses at the ARS research location;
 - Other travel costs appropriate to the proposed research; and
 - Research costs associated with the proposed research.
 - Funds to be awarded to the 1890 LGU to cover salary, research costs, and other expenses must be listed in the "ARS to Reimburse" column of the REE-454. Note that all research materials to be purchased from 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship funds must be purchased by the 1890 LGU.
 - Any additional funds to be supplied by ARS in addition to the 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship funds must be listed in the "ARS In-House" column of the REE-454.
 - Budget requirements of 7 CFR 550 for NACAs:
 - Indirect costs are prohibited.
 - The 20 percent matching requirement has been waived by ARS for this program.

Completed applications must be forwarded by the RL to their Area Office. The Area Office must then send all approved applications via email to robert.macdonald@ars.usda.gov by the program deadline.

Application Review and Selection

All applications will be screened to ensure they satisfy the requirements as described above. Those that do not will be returned without review.

Applications will be reviewed by a panel composed of the four ARS Office of National Program Deputy Administrators or their designated National Program Leader substitutes. Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the ARS' mission;
- Ability to further the development of the 1890 LGU faculty applicant;
- Scientific merit of the proposed research; and
- Relevance and utility to the base-funded research of the host RL.

The Administrator of ARS will make the final selection of proposals for funding based on the panel's evaluations.