



# US Dept. of Agriculture

## FUNDER FOCUS

*MSU Office of Research & Economic Development*

# USDA Focus Agenda Overview

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- Welcome & Program Overview
- Keynote: Dr. Dionne Toombs, USDA NIFA
- About Competitive Funding: Dr. Cassie McGee
- About Non-Competitive Funding: Ms. Tina Kinard
- **Break**
- MSU USDA Administrators Panel
- **Break**
- MSU USDA Awardees Panel



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here!



# United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) FUNDER FOCUS

Everything you need to know about  
the different USDA Agencies



# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is made up of 29 agencies and offices with nearly 100,000 employees who serve the American people at more than 4,500 locations across the country and abroad.
- Provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.
- Their vision is to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our Nation's natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.
- Their strategic goals serve as a roadmap for the Department to help ensure they achieve their mission and implement their vision.



# USDA AGENCIES

- Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/>  
AMS facilitates the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international markets while ensuring fair trading practices and promoting a competitive and efficient marketplace. AMS constantly works to develop new marketing services to increase customer satisfaction.
- Agricultural Research Service (ARS) - <https://www.ars.usda.gov/>  
ARS is USDA's principal in-house research agency. ARS leads America towards a better future through agricultural research and information.
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) - <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/home/>  
APHIS provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. The agency improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.

# USDA AGENCIES CONTINUED

- Economic Research Service (ERS) - <https://www.ers.usda.gov/>  
ERS is USDA's principal social science research agency. Each year, ERS communicates research results and socioeconomic indicators via briefings, analyses for policymakers and their staffs, market analysis updates, and major reports.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) - <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/>  
The Farm Service Agency implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.
- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/>  
FNS increases food security and reduces hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthy diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

# USDA AGENCIES CONTINUED

- Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) - <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/>  
FSIS enhances public health and well-being by protecting the public from foodborne illness and ensuring that the nation's meat, poultry and egg products are safe, wholesome, and correctly packaged.
- Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) - <https://fas.usda.gov/>  
FAS works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products. This USDA agency operates programs designed to build new markets and improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace.
- Forest Service (FS) - <https://www.fs.usda.gov/>  
FS sustains the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

# USDA AGENCIES CONTINUED

- FPAC Business Center - <https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/>  
The FPAC Business Center is a first-of-its-kind organization at USDA, combining the talent of employees from all three FPAC agencies into specialized teams that serve employees and customers across the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA).
- National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) - <https://www.nass.usda.gov/>  
NASS serves the basic agricultural and rural data needs of the country by providing objective, important and accurate statistical information and services to farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses and public officials. This data is vital to monitoring the ever-changing agricultural sector and carrying out farm policy.
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/>  
NIFA's unique mission is to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities by supporting research, education, and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations. NIFA doesn't perform actual research, education, and extension but rather helps fund it at the state and local level and provides program leadership in these areas.



# USDA AGENCIES CONTINUED

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>  
NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment.
- Risk Management Agency (RMA) - <https://www.rma.usda.gov/>  
RMA helps to ensure that farmers have the financial tools necessary to manage their agricultural risks. RMA provides coverage through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, which promotes national welfare by improving the economic stability of agriculture.
- Rural Development (RD) - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/>  
RD helps rural areas to develop and grow by offering Federal assistance that improves quality of life. RD targets communities in need and then empowers them with financial and technical resources.

# USDA AGENCIES CONTINUED

- Rural Utilities Service (RUS) - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-utilities-service>  
RUS provides financing to build or improve infrastructure in rural communities. This includes water and waste treatment, electric power and telecommunications services. These services help expand economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural residents.
- Rural Housing Service (RHS) <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-housing-service>  
RHS offers a variety of programs to build or improve housing and essential community facilities in rural areas. RHS offers loans, grants and loan guarantees for single- and multi-family housing, child care centers, fire and police stations, hospitals, libraries, nursing homes, schools, first responder vehicles and equipment, housing for farm laborers and much more.
- Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-business-cooperative-service>  
RBS offers programs to help businesses grow as well as job training for people living in rural areas. These programs help provide the capital, training, education and entrepreneurial skills that can help people living in rural areas start and grow businesses or find jobs in agricultural markets and in the bio-based economy.

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## Keynote

### **Dr. Dionne Toombs**

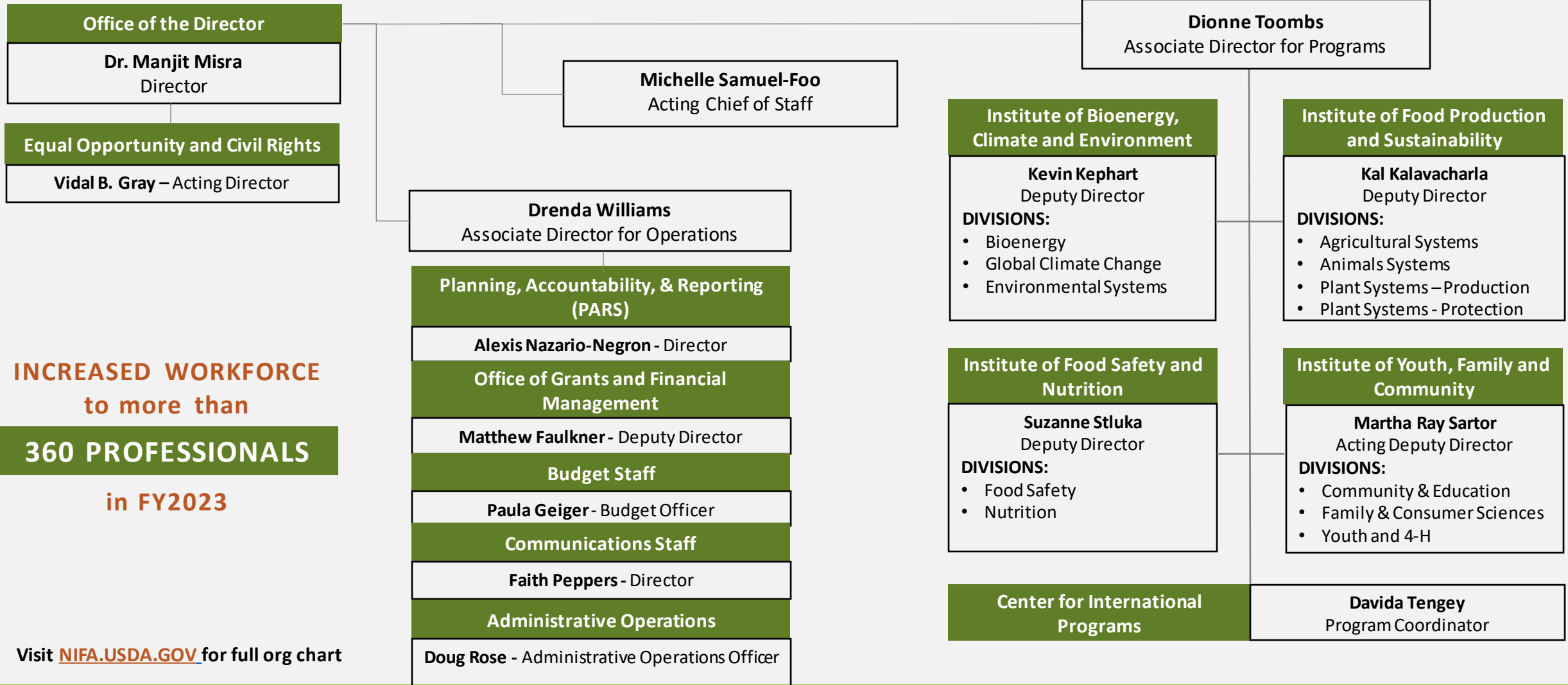
Associate Director for Programs

Office of the Director, USDA

National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)



# HOW IS NIFA STRUCTURED?



**INCREASED WORKFORCE**  
to more than  
**360 PROFESSIONALS**  
in FY2023

Visit [NIFA.USDA.GOV](https://NIFA.USDA.GOV) for full org chart





# Exploring Funding Opportunities

## Grants Website

[nifa.usda.gov/grants](https://nifa.usda.gov/grants)

## RFA Calendar

[nifa.usda.gov/grants/upcoming-request-applications-calendar](https://nifa.usda.gov/grants/upcoming-request-applications-calendar)

## Events Calendar

[nifa.usda.gov/events](https://nifa.usda.gov/events)

## Application Status Dashboard

[nifa.usda.gov/data/nifa-dashboards/application-status-dashboard](https://nifa.usda.gov/data/nifa-dashboards/application-status-dashboard)





# Non-Discrimination Statement

<https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs, are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.





## **About Competitive Funding**

**Dr. Cassie McGee**

Special Projects Grant Coordinator  
MS Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station  
MAFES Administration

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

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# USDA AGENCIES – COMPETITIVE FUNDING

- Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – also non-competitive
- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
- Forest Service – mostly non-competitive
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Rural Development (RD)





# USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) was established by the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill) to find innovative solutions to issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and communities.



# Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri>

- AFRI is USDA's flagship competitive grant program that provides funding for fundamental and applied research, education, and extension projects in the food and agricultural sciences.
- NIFA awards AFRI research, education, and extension grants to improve rural economies, increase food production, stimulate the bioeconomy, mitigate impacts of climate variability, address water availability issues, ensure food safety and security, enhance human nutrition, and train the next generation of the agricultural workforce.
- AFRI has numerous program area priorities in the three Requests for Applications (RFAs) posted each year. Each program area priority has its own deadline(s).
- AFRI-funded science is vital to meeting food, fiber, and fuel demands as the world's population races toward a projected 10 billion by 2050 concomitant with diminishing land and water resources and increasingly variable climatic conditions. In addition, AFRI programs help develop new technologies and a workforce that will advance our national security, our energy self-sufficiency, and the health of Americans.

# AFRI PROGRAMS

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri/afri-request-applications>

- AFRI Education and Workforce Development (EWD) focuses on developing the next generation of research, education, and extension professionals in the food and agricultural sciences.
- <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/agriculture-food-research-initiative-education-workforce-development>
- Six priority areas
  - Professional Development for Agricultural Literacy
  - Agricultural Workforce Training at Community Colleges
  - Food and Agricultural Non-Formal Education
  - Research and Extension Experiences for Undergraduates
  - Predoctoral Fellowships
  - Postdoctoral Fellowships
- RFA, NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, and AFRI EWD RFA Additional Information for Part IV C is needed when developing your proposal.

# AFRI PROGRAMS

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri/afri-request-applications>

- AFRI Foundational and Applied Science Program (FAS) supports grants in six AFRI priority areas to advance knowledge in both fundamental and applied sciences important to agriculture.
- <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/agriculture-food-research-initiative-foundational-applied-science>
- Six priority areas
  - Plant Health and Production and Plant Products
  - Animal Health and Productions and Animal Products
  - Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health
  - Bioenergy, Natural Resources, and Environment
  - Agriculture Systems and Technology
  - Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities
- RFA, NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, and AFRI FAS RFA Additional Information for Part IV C is needed when developing your proposal.

# AFRI PROGRAMS

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri/afri-request-applications>

- AFRI Sustainable Agricultural Systems (SAS) – Request for Applications (RFA) must focus on approaches that promote transformational changes in the U.S. food and agriculture system. NIFA seeks creative and visionary applications that take a systems approach for projects are expected to significantly improve the supply of affordable, safe, nutritious, and accessible agricultural products, while fostering economic development and rural prosperity in America. These approaches must demonstrate current needs and anticipate future social, cultural, behavioral, economic, health, and environmental impacts. Additionally, the outcomes of the work being proposed should result in societal benefits, including promotion of rural prosperity and enhancement of quality of life for all those involved in food and agricultural value chains from production to utilization and consumption.
- <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/agriculture-food-research-initiative-sustainable-agricultural-systems>
- RFA, NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, and AFRI SAS RFA Additional Information for Part IV C is needed when developing your proposal.



# AFRI PROGRAMS

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri/afri-request-applications>

- AFRI Interagency Programs – AFRI works with other federal agencies to fund and support projects of mutual interest
- MSU occasionally sees this type of funding but not as frequent as other programs
- 12 programs (current and past)
  - Partnering Agencies: National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Department of Energy, Department of Defense, and others
- <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/agriculture-food-research-initiative-afri/afri-interagency-programs>

# OTHER NIFA PROGRAMS

- Other Programs we see multiple proposals being submitted to:
  - Higher Education Challenge Grants Program (HEC)
  - Rural Health and Safety Education Competitive Grants Program (RHSE)
  - Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) – submitted to regional entities (North Central, Northeast, Southern (UGA) and Western
  - Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI)
  - Crop Protection and Pest Management Competitive Grants Program (CPPMC)
  - Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)
  - Equipment Grants Program (EGP)
  - Animal Health and Disease Research Program (AHDR)
  - Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR)
- <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/competitive-AFRI-nonAFRI>

# NIFA RESOURCES

- Upcoming Request for Applications Calendar:  
<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/upcoming-request-applications-calendar>
- NIFA Grants Application Guide - <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/nifa-22-001-nifa-grants-application-guide>
  - You will use this guide along with the RFA with all NIFA proposal submissions.
- AFRI Request for Applications Resources - <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications-resources>
  - This will provide information, instructions, forms and links needed for AFRI Submissions.
  - Along with the AFRI RFA and NIFA Grants Application Guide, each RFA has an RFA Additional Information form with formatting guidance.



## **About Non-Competitive Funding**

**Tina Kinard, CRA, CPRA**

Associate Director

MSU Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP)

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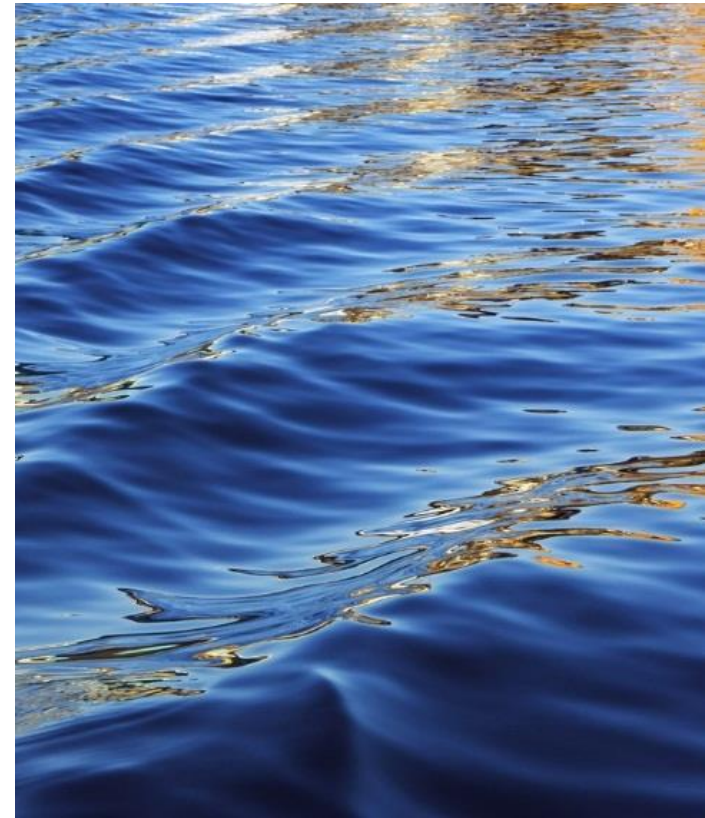
# USDA AGENCIES – NON-COMPETITIVE FUNDING

- Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – also competitive
- Forest Service (FS) – also competitive
  - Forest Products Laboratory (FPL)



# USDA AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE (ARS)

ARS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Our job is finding solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table.



# ARS TIDBITS

- ARS has 3 different Agreements that are used to fund projects.
  - Non-Assistance Cooperative Agreements (NACA) - Primary
  - Research Support Agreements (RSA)
  - Cooperator Agreement (CA)
- ARS determines the mechanism used to fund a project.
- The type of Agreement determines if Indirect Cost is allowed, limited, or not allowed.
- MSU's PI works with the ARS PI to come up with a Scope of Work based on a need that ARS has.
- Proposal submission is a Budget and Budget Justification emailed to the ARS PI and their assistant by OSP.
- OSP has ARS Budget, Budget Justification, and Budget Reallocation Templates.
- All changes requested must be approved by ARS (NCE's, Budget revisions, change of PI, etc.)
- ARS Research page: <https://www.ars.usda.gov/research/>


# ARS NON-ASSISTANCE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS (NACA)

- Budget and Budget Justification template is available.
- Indirect Cost and Tuition is not allowed.
- Cost share is required at no less than 20%.
  - Keep cost share 20 to 25%.
- Unallowed indirect cost and indirect cost on cost share are allowed as part of the cost share.
- Hard dollars are required for cost share (salaries, fringe, etc.)
  - If congressionally mandated 2.9% of the total cost share has to be hard dollars.
  - If Non-congressionally mandated 7.6% of the total cost share has to be hard dollars.
- Tuition cannot be used as part of the cost share.

# ARS RESEARCH SUPPORT AGREEMENTS (RSA) AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (CA)

- RSA
  - Budget and Budget Justification is typically not submitted, but if so, there is a budget template.
  - Typically, we receive the RSA and if changes are needed to the budget, we send it back to ARS to correct.
  - Indirect Cost is allowed at 10% Total Direct Cost.
- CA
  - Budget and Budget Justification is required to be submitted.
  - Full Indirect Cost is allowed.



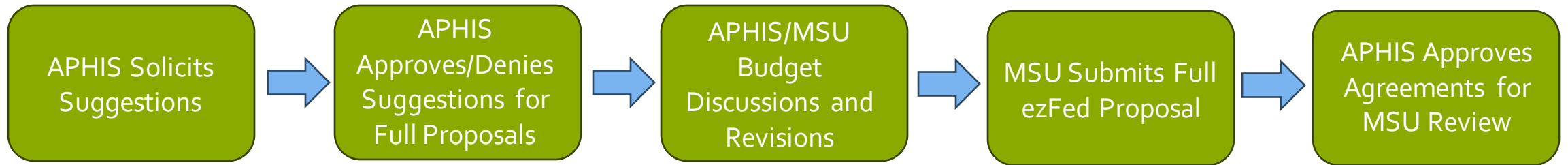


# USDA ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)

APHIS' work centers around animal and plant health, but our programs also address animal welfare, biotechnology, wildlife damage management, and global trade.



# APHIS TIDBITS



- APHIS is mostly non-competitive and solicits suggestions via email or APHIS direct submission portal consisting of a budget, budget justification, and proposal narrative.
- OSP reviews these and treats them as full proposal submissions.
  - APHIS also accepts unsolicited suggestions that can be reviewed and given feedback for possible funding in subsequent years.
- APHIS reviews their agency budget and approves/denies suggestions based on where research money is allocated that year. Those approved will be asked to submit full proposals in ezFed.
- APHIS/PI discuss possible budget reductions or escalations based on available funding.
- MSU submits full proposal with APHIS approved budget in ezFed. ezFed proposal consists of SF424, SF424A, Financial Plan, Work Plan, and generic documents loaded by OSP.
- APHIS approves full proposals for funding and creates agreements for MSU review and signature.

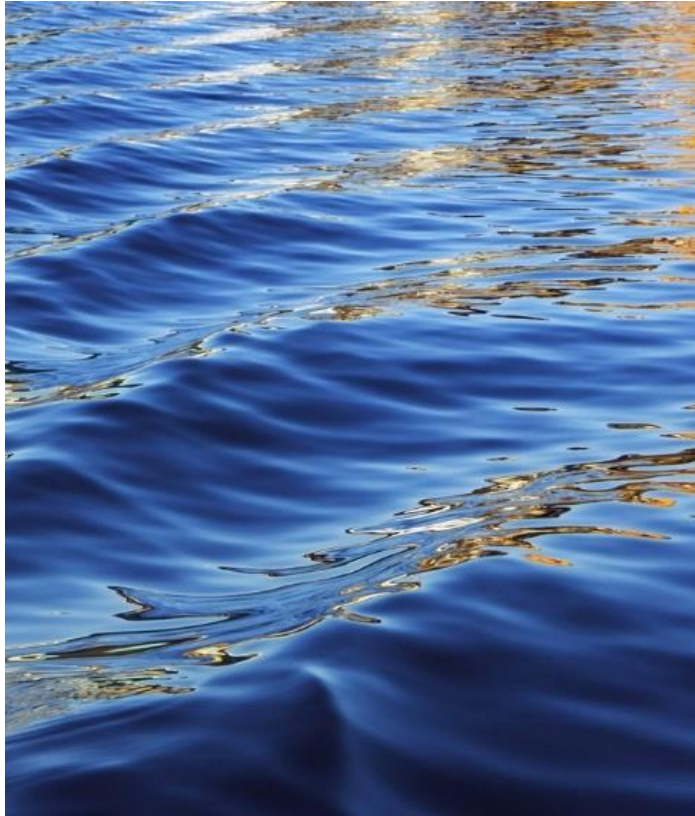
# APHIS AGREEMENTS

- Indirect costs are generally limited. (17.647% TDC, 10% TDC, 10% MTDC, etc.)
- Cost share is not required.
- Agreements come as Cooperative Agreements or Grants.
- Cooperative agreements are generally funded for 1 year only.
- NCEs can be requested for a one-time extension of 1 year.
  - Submit revised SF424 and written letter to OSP for submission to APHIS.
- Progress reports are submitted via ezFed by PI/department. Check your agreement terms and conditions for information regarding their frequency. OSP does not handle progress reports.
  - OSP can supply progress report template upon request.



# USDA FOREST SERVICE (FS)

The Forest Service awards grants and agreements to various entities to carry out our motto: caring for the land and serving people.



# FS TIDBITS

- FS is mainly non-competitive, but there are a few competitive opportunities.
- FS Principal Investigators generally solicit submissions from MSU Principal Investigators.
- Proposal submissions generally consist of: MSU budget (MSU template and FS template), budget narrative, and scope of work (template may be available based on opportunity).
- FS has their own budget form (FS-1500-17b Financial Plan) to be completed at the time of proposal/award.
- For almost all FS agreements, indirect is limited (or not allowed) and cost share is required.
  - Most agreements require 20-25% cost share. Some require 1:1 cost share match.
- Tuition is not allowed.



# FPL TIDBITS

- Forest Products Laboratory (USDA FPL): laboratory of USDA FS; submissions are considered to be separate from USDA FS submissions
- FPL proposal submissions generally consist of: FPL Partnership Agreement proposal (filled out first by FPL and finished by MSU), FPL Financial Plan (FS-1500-17b), and scope of work. Occasionally, a budget narrative is requested.

# FS AGREEMENTS

Joint Venture (JV) Agreement

Partnership Agreement (PA)

Cost Share (CS) Agreement

Cooperative Agreement (CA)

Domestic Grant

The type of agreement being pursued and the FS station/program that the agreement runs through affects the amount of indirect that can be included and the amount of cost share required.

# Contact Information

- Cassie McGee
  - Special Projects Grant Coordinator, MAFES
  - Bost Extension Center – 211G
  - (662) 325-4821
  - [cassie.mcgee@msstate.edu](mailto:cassie.mcgee@msstate.edu)
  
- Tina Kinard
  - Associate Director, Office of Sponsored Programs
  - 301 Research Blvd
  - (662) 325-3273
  - [tkinard@osp.msstate.edu](mailto:tkinard@osp.msstate.edu)

# BREAK

## A few upcoming events of interest....

- [ORED Research Week!](#) April 2nd-12th
- [CALs/MAFES Faculty & Staff Spring Meeting and Luncheon](#) April 3<sup>rd</sup>
- [STTR/SBIR Field Trip to JSU](#) (Free!) April 3<sup>rd</sup>
- [Undergraduate Research Symposium](#) April 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>
- [ORED Spring Symposium](#) on Disability April 16<sup>th</sup>
- [Athlete Engineering Summit](#) April 16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>
- [MSU Research Awards Nominations](#) Deadline May 10<sup>th</sup>



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Sonya Baird

Manager of Facilities & Research, MSU Dept. of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Entomology & Plant Pathology

Natalie Belk, CRA

Contract and Grant Specialist II, Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station Administration (MAFES)

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Haleigh Fason

Contract and Grants Specialist II, Forest Wildlife Research Center (FWRC)

Tina Kinard, CRA, CPRA

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Mary Ann Latham, CRA

Contract and Grant Specialist, MAFES Administration

KarLee Perkins

Grants & Contracts Administrator, Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP)





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Dr. Joby Czarnecki

Associate Research Professor, Plant & Soil Sciences/Geosystems Research Institute

Dr. Drew Gholson

Assistant Professor & Coordinator, NCAAR, Delta Research & Extension Center

Dr. Mohammad Marufuzzaman

Associate Professor & Graduate Coordinator, Industrial Systems Engineering

Dr. Mary Nelson Robertson

Assistant Professor, School of Human Sciences

Dr. Mark Shankle

Research Professor, Pontotoc Ridge-Flatwoods Branch

Dr. Ashley Schulz

Assistant Professor, Forestry





# Thank you!

The recording of today's program will be available and emailed to attendees shortly, as well as stored in the shared folder. Please take a moment to share your feedback in the program evaluation you will also receive via email.

Please contact us at ORD if we can be of assistance.

[development@ord.msstate.edu](mailto:development@ord.msstate.edu)

[Stephanie@ord.msstate.edu](mailto:Stephanie@ord.msstate.edu)

[Lele@ord.msstate.edu](mailto:Lele@ord.msstate.edu)



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