



From: Faculty Research Development Office (FRDO)  
Office of the Vice President for Research

Subject: Limited Competition: USDA NIFA Women and Minorities in STEM Fields (WAMS) Program

Date: January 9, 2020

UNM Researchers,

This 2020 NIFA Women and Minorities in STEM Fields (WAMS) Program will support projects with a target audience of K-14 students (kindergarten through 12th grade plus two years of post-secondary schooling). **Four-year undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral-focused projects will not be awarded this cycle.**

WAMS-funded project activities must support the creation, adaptation, and adoption of learning materials and teaching strategies to operationalize what we know about how students learn. Many of these concepts are identified in the National Research Council's publication: [How People Learn](#). WAMS-funded projects shall also focus on imparting both technical knowledge as well as 'soft' skills such as communication, team work, and problem solving, as these are abilities expected by employers. These concepts may be found in the publication: [Comparative Analysis of Soft Skills: What is Important for New Graduates?](#) The purpose of this program is to support research, education/teaching, and extension projects that increase participation by women and underrepresented minorities from rural areas in STEM. NIFA intends this program to address educational needs, as determined by each institution, within broadly defined areas of food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences.

Applications recommended for funding must highlight and emphasize the development of a competent and qualified workforce in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences. WAMS-funded projects should improve the economic health and viability of rural communities by developing research initiatives that focus on new and emerging employment opportunities in STEM occupations. Projects that contribute to the economic viability of rural communities are also encouraged.

A proposed project must address one or more Educational Need Areas and/or be an Applied Project that addresses research, outreach and capacity building to benefit the communities served, especially that of their students. For complete details, including a listing of Educational Need Areas and Applied Projects, see the RFA at: <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/rfa/FY2020-WAMS-RFA-20191219.pdf>.

Projects may range from 24 to 36 months. The maximum total budget is \$100,000. For FY 2020, if a grant provides a particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, the grant recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions. NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if NIFA determines that: (1) the results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or (2) the project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement. **The deadline for full proposals to the USDA is February 24, 2020.**

**This is a limited competition. Each institution is limited to one proposal.** If you are interested in submitting a proposal to this program, please email a statement of interest with a tentative title, a brief project description (200 words), and names and departments of all senior personnel by **noon, Wednesday, January 15, 2020** to [limited@unm.edu](mailto:limited@unm.edu) with the **subject line indicating: NIFA WAMS - your name**. Based on the e-mail responses received, the Limited Competitions Management Team may announce a call for preproposals.

Please distribute this notice to departments and individuals whom you believe would be interested.

*If you are affiliated with HSC, please contact Corey Ford ([CFord@salud.unm.edu](mailto:CFord@salud.unm.edu)) or Cassandra Misenar ([CMisenar@salud.unm.edu](mailto:CMisenar@salud.unm.edu)) for more information.*