NIFA Update

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Please see additional updates on deadlines, award processing and no-cost extensions summarized from the NIFA website. Please contact me with questions. Kaser.37@osu.edu

**NIFA Update:** Due to the disruptions arising from the national response to COVID-19, NIFA is extending certain deadlines. NIFA will continue to monitor the situation and post updates to this guidance on our website.

Changes as of 3.18.2020

**Higher Education Challenge Grant Program**
Previous deadline: March 23, New deadline: April 2

**Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program**
Previous deadline: March 19, New deadline: April 2

**AFRI**
https://www.nifa.usda.gov/afri-deadlines

The following Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) application submission deadlines will be adjusted, as follows:
- Previous deadline: March 19, New deadline: April 2
- Previous deadline: March 26, New deadline: April 9
- Previous deadline: April 2, New deadline: April 9
- Previous deadline: April 9, New deadline: April 16

**NIFA statement:** (3.18.2020) We recognize many institutions are facing operational challenges in relation to COVID-19 (coronavirus). We have policies regarding accepting late applications, available online. If your application is delayed, please let us know as soon as possible and submit all the required documentation after you submit your application to us. We will consider your request at that time based on the information that you provide.

**Pending Awards**
If you are a new/prospective competitive award grantee and waiting for your official award letter, we are working diligently to complete the administrative review of your recommended award. NIFA expects to release Fiscal Year 2019 competitive award funds by the end of April, but likely sooner depending on the timely response of grantees to NIFA requests for information.
As in the past, at the grantee’s discretion and without prior NIFA approval, the grantee can incur, at their own risk, pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to NIFA making the award. See 2 CFR 200.308 (d)(1) and NIFA’s terms and conditions. (Investigators can request a preliminary account be established in the PI Portal, by completing the OCG-005 and providing it to your Sponsored Program Officer. The form requires PI and Dept. Chair signature)

No-cost extensions (NCE)
We are seeking guidance on requesting extended no-cost extensions from NIFA and are awaiting their response. Currently the process is as follow. Source can be found at https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-18-016-NIFA-Federal-Assistance-Policy-Guide.pdf, (pg. 63-64)

Your request for an NCE should be submitted to you Sponsored Program Officer (a.k.a. Authorized Representative (AR) with the bulleted points below.

NCE - COMPETITIVE AWARDS

If necessary, NIFA can grant a one-time extension of time, for up to 12 months, to complete an award (No-cost extensions are typically granted when additional work remains to be completed, and the recipient organization still has resources remaining to complete the work. However, the mere fact that funds remain at the end of the initial project period is not sufficient support for a No-Cost Extension. If NIFA does not permit an extension of an award, the project will end on the original date identified in the Notice of Award. Refusing to extend a project period does not terminate an award. A single extension will not usually be for more than 12 months, and only exceptional circumstances will support deviation from this policy (7 CFR 3430.58(b)).

NIFA will not approve any extension request if the primary purpose of the proposed extension is to permit the use of unobligated balances of funds, the terms and conditions of the award prohibit an extension, the extension would require additional Federal funds, or the extension would require changes in the approved objectives or scope.

The request must contain, at a minimum, the following information:
- The length of the additional time required to complete the project objectives and a justification for the extension.
- A summary of the progress to date (a copy of the most recent Progress Report and, where applicable, the attachment is acceptable provided the information is current).
- An estimate of the funds expected to remain unobligated on the scheduled expiration date.
- A projected timetable to complete the portion(s) of the project for which the extension is being requested; and,
- The signature of the AR and the PD/PI. The necessary signatures must be included, or the request will be returned by NIFA.