Risk Management Education and Outreach Request For Applications (RFA)
(Scroll down for Latest Questions)

General Points

*Please note that this document does not replace the RFA. The purpose is to highlight important facts and criteria in order to assist you in scribing a concrete application. Applications will be assessed based on ALL the criteria and requirements stated in the RFA.

- Questions concerning the RFA should be submitted to the RME email address: *RMA.Risk-Ed@rma.usda.gov*
- Responses to all question will be posted every Monday by the COB
- RME's support of writing application: Please write concisely and clearly. Reviewers will be examining applications for performance based results.
- Applicants are encouraged to have their application proof read prior to submission for formal review.
- Executive Summary one (1) page and the Narrative must not exceed 10 pages.
- Hard copy applications shall NOT be accepted.
- Previous partners who are reapplying will have current projects reviewed for compliance with the already existing agreement.

FAQ's for RFA's

As of July 8, 2011

1. **Q:** **When I downloaded the Grant Application there was no Current and Pending Report form to fill out. How do we get a copy of the Current and Pending Report blank document to fill out?**
   A: On the grants.gov site under the full application tab for the corresponding application, the Current & Pending form is a Word document and can be filled out.

2. **Q:** **Do we need to submit documentation such as the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace, etc. from the partnering organizations? Also, what information on them is needed?**
   A: You do not need to include these forms for them. However, you are to ensure that they are aware of the Federal Guidelines and are following them because you will be held accountable for what they are doing. The information that is needed is what is asked for on the form. If it does not apply to you then write Not Applicable.

3. **Q:** **What, if any, is the variance allowed by line item without a budget revision?**
   A: If your application is awarded and a revision needs to be made to the budget it would really depend. Keep the regional office and the grants and agreement specialist informed and they will work with you. Any other budget revisions if necessary will be discussed during negotiations.

4. **Q:** **Is it allowable to include an occupancy allocation in the budget relating to utilities, Center rent and insurance as well as IT expenses, etc. sustaining the funded program?**
   A: Please read through the Federal Guidelines (Cost Principles) regarding grants and cooperative agreements.

5. **Q:** **Is the Plan of Operation in the event of a Human Pandemic Event part of the Proposal Narrative and does this material count toward the ten page maximum?**
   A: This is supposed to be a part of the 10 pages.

6. **Q:** **Is capital equipment an acceptable budget item? I would like to add remote weather stations to two areas of the county where frost risks are high and access to localized weather data is not available.**
   A: Equipment is defined as any 1 item that is greater than or equal to $5,000. I would recommend that you read the circulars regarding grants and cooperative agreements and what your responsibility is in handling and disposing of equipment that is purchased by the government.

7. **Q:** **I am having trouble accessing the full announcement electronically for the above program. Can you advise?**
   A: I would suggest that you contact grants.gov and ask them for assistance in accessing this application.

8. **Q:** **I'm currently putting together an application for the RMA Outreach Partnership program. The form on the website for current & pending support is not one that you can fill out. Is there another one you could send me to fill out electronically?**
   A: The form is not in the application package. You can find it on grants.gov under full announcement. It is a Word document and can be filled in.

As of July 1, 2011

1. **Q:** **Does the 'Project Plan of Operation in the Event of a Human Pandemic Outbreak' need to be submitted with the proposal or is this something we submit if we are awarded?**
   A: Yes the pandemic plan needs to be included with the proposal.

2. **Q:** **Would it be acceptable to submit a proposal in which our organization would co-manage the proposed activities with another organization or would you prefer that one organization be the lead organization and others work as partner organizations? We are a national organization and are considering co-managing/ co-leading with a regional organization.**
   A: You may and are encouraged to partner; However, one group should take the lead and be the POC for the agreement.

3. **Q:** **Can we check with the RMA regional office for Raleigh, NC Regional Office for a suggestion on a group to partner with on crop insurance training? If so, can you provide a contact for that office?**
A: RMA cannot provide that type of information. You may want to check past awardees found on the RMA website under partnerships or conduct an online search.

4. **Q:** **If we plan to do similar activities in more than one state within a RMA region, we need to submit a different proposal for each state?**
A: Targeted States requires a separate submission for each state because funding is separated by state.

5. **Q:** **Would you like us to email to you the documents in the stipulated Word and Excel formats once we have submitted our application to grants.gov in adobe?**
A: You do not have to email the documents. Grants.gov in block 15 will allow you to upload Word and Excel documents. Please try to submit in the required format.

6. **Q:** **We are planning to submit an application to Risk Management Agency but have a problem. None of the Standard Forms in the Application Kit can be saved with the data which we enter. SF 1049 does not even allow data entry.   I do not see how we can submit these forms electronically if I cannot save the data entered into them. Am I missing something? Is there another location for these forms?**
A: The forms when opened by our office can be filled in online. You can also find these forms online. They will have to be completed and submitted with the application. You can scan the forms in and upload them in Section 15 of the SF-424 where it says add attachments.

7. **Q:** **All attachments that go onto the adobe form must be in pdf format. I am not sure how a budget narrative should be done in Excel - especially when we have to convert that to a pdf in order to attach to the adobe form. Can you explain this a little bit better?**
A: The budget narrative in Excel can be added as a separate attachment into grants.gov.

8. **Q:** **Can we propose an 18 month project, or would we need to request a no-cost extension if the project would exceed the 12 month period? Alternatively, could we propose a project that would run December 2011 through November 2012?**
A: Your proposal is limited to 1 year from the project start date as stated in the RFA. "No cost extensions" are not encouraged, required justification and certainly should not be considered at the beginning of a project's work as a means to extend the work stated in the Statement of Work past the project end date. Please only submit a proposal for work that can be completed within the 1 year time frame and do not consider a "no cost extension" as there are no guarantees it would be granted.

9. **Q:** **Where can I find the details on what is to be contained in the proposal narrative?**
A: You will have to read through the RFA and include all of the information that is requested. There is no set format.

10. **Q:** **How often does this partnership opportunity arise – is this an annual opportunity? Or is the opportunity offered more frequently (quarterly, twice per year, etc.)?**

A: This is on an annual basis.

11. **Q: How likely it is that one state application would be funded while another is not, even though substantially similar services are described in both proposals.**
A: For the tribal programs as outlined in the RFA Applications serving Tribal Nations will e accepted and managed from the RMA Regional office serving the designated Tribal Office. It is also possible for applications to be funded in one region and not another because of the paneling and points. Another application may score higher.

12. **Q: Under the application submission instructions #4, it lists Executive Summary, Proposal Narrative, and Statement of Work. Should these items be separate attachments or combined into one attachment for #15?**
A: The Executive Summary is one page. The Proposal Narrative includes the Statement of Work.

Definitions of Terms in RFA (as requested)

➢ **Limited Resource Farmer:** (1) A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than $146,400 in each of the previous two years; (2) A person with a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of 4 or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous years.
  o This value will be increased from $100,000 beginning in fiscal year 2004 to adjust for inflation using the "Prices Paid by Farmer Index" complied by NASS.
  o Total household income will be determined annually and indexed for inflation using Commerce Department Data.
➢ **Beginning Farmer or Rancher** (means an individual or entity who)**:**
  a. Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity
  b. Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.
    i. In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.
    ii. In the case of a contract with an entity, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management, or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

➢ **Socially Disadvantaged:** A socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group, without regard to their individual qualities. These groups consist of the following:
    o American Indians or Alaskan Natives
    o Asians

          o   Blacks or African Americans
          o   Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
          o   Hispanics

❖ A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals.
 *Note: Gender alone is not a covered group

➢ **Indian Tribes:** Indian Tribe means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaske native Claims settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) that is Federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians. Tribal Government Relationships website available at: http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-19124.pdf

As of June 29, 2011

1. **Q:** **We followed the steps in the "down load the application" as described in the federal register notice and instead of one application package to down load for the combined Education and Outreach Partnership Programs there was an application package for each the CFDA numbers. CFDA number 10.549 is titled Commodity Partnerships for Small Agricultural Risk Management Sessions and the application package for CFDA number 10.455 is titled Community outreach and assistance partnership program. Which of these two packages is the correct one to download for this RFA? If they are the same application for both, will choosing one CFDA number over the other cause it to be sent to the wrong person in USDA RMA for review. The numbers appear to be reversed from the CFDA numbers in the federal register.**
A: You can apply to either 10.455 or 10.459 which are both for Risk Management Education and Outreach Partnership Programs as stated in the RFA.

2. **Q:** **Are hard-copy applications accepted?**
A: Hard copy applications will not be accepted. Please submit all applications through Grants.gov.

3. **Q:** **Is there a separate RFA for community outreach?**
A: No. This Request for Applications (RFA) Announcement is for a combination of the programs previously known as the ''Commodity Partnerships for Small Agricultural Risk Management Education Sessions'' and the ''Community Outreach and Assistance Partnerships Program.'' The purpose of this combined cooperative partnership agreements program is to deliver crop insurance education and risk management training to U.S. agricultural producers to assist them in identifying and managing production, marketing, legal, financial and human risk.

4. **Q: What are the minimum and maximum awards for each grant?**
   A: Any application that requests Federal **funding of less than $20,000 or more than $100,000 a project will be rejected.** RMA also reserves the right to fund successful applications at an amount less than requested if it is judged that the application can be implemented at a lower funding level.

5. **Q: How many applications may I submit?**
   A: Applicants may apply to deliver education to producers in more than one Targeted State, but a separate application must be submitted for each Targeted State because applications shall be compared to applications submitted for the same state. Any single application proposing to conduct educational activities in more than one Targeted State shall be rejected.

6. **Q: How can I find the application?**
   A: The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to http://www.grants.gov , click on ''Apply For Grants'' in the left-hand column, click on ''Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions,'' enter the funding opportunity number USDA–RMA–RME–SSGP–002011 in the appropriate box and click ''Download Package.'' From the search results, click ''Download'' to access the application package.

   You can also find the package via http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/agreements/ .

7. **Q: How can I get help with navigating Grants.gov?**
   A: Grants.gov assistance is available as follows: Grants.gov customer support, Toll Free: 1–800–518–4726. Business Hours: 24 Hours a day. E-mail: support@grants.gov.

8. **Q: What is the deadline for submitting applications?**
   A: For Education and Community Outreach applications, the deadline is ***Thursday, July 14, 2011 at 5 pm EST.***

   For Targeted States applications, the deadline is ***Friday, July 15, 2011 at 5 pm EST.***

   Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

9. **Q: Are there any templates available (or required) for this particular grant proposal?**
   A: There are no templates. Please use your own writing style to respond to the requirements.

10. **Q: Is this application subject to review by the state under Executive Order 12372 process (Q 19 on SF-424)?**
    A: No.

11. **Q: If we currently have funding from RMA, are we allowed to apply again (for a separate project)? I wasn't sure if there was a limit to the number of consecutive years we can receive funding.**
    A: Yes you can apply. The agreement that you currently have should be ending September 30.

12. **Q:** **We were granted a time extension with our current RMA grant, and our project time period now ends January 2012. Could we submit an application, as long as the project is new and the start date is after January?**
    A: You may still apply. The start date will be the same October 1, 2011 if you receive an award.

13. **Q:** **When pulling up the application form within grants.gov you have to list either 10.455 OR 10.459 to get either to download. They have the same offering agency, description, and opportunity number, but the other CFDA # cannot be typed into the number box.**
    A: Please just apply to either number. You cannot enter both.

14. **Q:** **Under the application submission instructions #4, it lists Executive Summary, Proposal Narrative, and Statement of Work. Should these items be separate attachments or combined into one attachment for #15?**
    A: The Executive Summary is one page. The Proposal Narrative is to include the Statement of Work as well.

15. **Q:** **I'm assuming #5 (Budget Narrative) and # 6 (Partnering Plan) under application submission instructions are separate attachments. Is that correct?**
    A: The Budget Narrative should be in Excel and is separate. The Partnering Plan is separate as well.

16. **Q:** **Under #16 b it asks for the Program/Project congressional district. We plan to conduct workshops in several of the Jackson, MS RMA states. The form will allow to list no more than 2 states. It mentions to list "all" if the whole US is targeted, but that's not the case.**
    A: Please list what you can.

17. **Q:** **The Lobby Disclosure form asks for a "registrant" and "individual performing services", neither of which is appropriate since we don't lobby. The form will not allow the box to be left blank. I don't want to list my name if I will not be lobbying.**
    A: You can write Not Applicable.

18. **Q:** **Are there any templates available (or required) for this particular grant proposal?**
    A: All of the templates are on grants.gov. You may also go to www.rma.usda.gov and look at the RFA.

19. **Q:** **To whom should letters of support or partnership for Risk Management Education and Outreach Partnerships Program proposals be addressed? Who is the correct contact this year?**
    A: Please use:
    Risk Management Education Division
    1400 Independence Ave – Room 6717
    Washington, DC 20520

20. **Q:** **For projects selected for funding, is a meeting planned which the PI or a project representative is expected to attend? If so, we will build those expenses into the budget.**
    A: There will not be a meeting planned for this year. There may be either a webinar or teleconference. You do not have to budget for a meeting.

21. **Q:** **The federal register instructions state to designate the RMA Region in Block 12 of the SF424. Block 12 is an uneditable field. Where would you like us to put the data?**
A: Please include this information in your proposal. We will update the website to indicate that Block 12 cannot be edited.

22. **Q:** **Where do we attach the required files (Executive Summary, Narrative, etc). The only field that will allow attachments is in Block 15 of the SF424. This field is usually not intended for that purpose. Is this where you want us to attach the files?**
A: Please upload all attachments in the section following Block 15. This is where all additional supporting documentation should go.

23. **Q:** **The federal register notice indicates a Current and Pending form will be included in the Grants.gov package. It is not. Can we just develop our own format and attach with the narrative and other files?**
A: The Current and Pending Report can be found on grants.gov under Other Supporting Documents in the Full Announcement Section.

24. **Q:** **The FAQ document mentions the requirement of the AD-1047 form. This form is not on the website or included in the Grants.gov package. The other associated instructional documents do not include this requirement. Is it indeed required, and if so, where can we get the form?**
A: The AD-1047 is not a required document the AD-1049 is required and can be found in the full announcement section as well. I will check the FAQs.

25. **Q:** **Do the Proposal Narrative, Statement of Work (SOW) and Budget Narrative ALL have to be within the 10 page limit listed for proposal narrative, or does the limit apply only to the proposal narrative with additional pages for the statement of work and the budget narrative?**
A: The Proposal Narrative which includes the Statement of Work is limited to 10 one-sided pages. The budget narrative and partnering plan are separate parts and are not counted as part of the 10 pages.

26. **Q:** **Is there a special Form for the SOW, like in some of the previous years?**
A: No. The RME-1 and RME-2 are not required. The Narrative has to be no more than 10 single-sided pages in a Word document.