**Food for Health Collaboration Initiative**
Request for Applications (RFA)

**Introduction:**  The **Food for Health Collaboration Initiative** is a comprehensive effort to further enhance Nebraska's research capacity to address critical societal and human health issues related to food.  The University of Nebraska is making an investment to facilitate research collaborations that will encourage faculty to more fully leverage its multi-campus intellectual capacity in order to strengthen their competitiveness for federal research funding.  Nebraska EPSCoR also is investing so that all Nebraska research institutions with expertise in Food for Health can strategically partner to grow the state's research capacity and competitiveness.  This RFA describes three grant opportunities associated with this initiative.

**Purpose:**  To encourage the leveraging of statewide expertise in Food for Health research by promoting multi-campus and multi-institutional collaborations.

**Intended Outcome**:  An increased capacity to address critical food and health issues important to Nebraskans by having the state's research institutions be more nationally grant competitive.

**Food for Health (FfH) Grant Descriptions:**[1]

## Planning and Proposal Generation Grants

    [Up to $20,000 total for one year; ~10 awards in FY16 and no awards in the FY17 FfH RFA]
Planning Grants are intended to facilitate and build new collaborations across University of Nebraska campuses and other research institutions in Nebraska.  Funding is available to support planning meetings, retreats, and travel to funding agencies to meet with National Program Leaders to gage support for programmatic/scientific directions.  These one-year grants are intended to position a potential team to 1) identify extramural funding opportunities that would grow their collective research portfolio in Food for Health, 2) identify knowledge gaps that must be addressed in order to prepare a competitive extramural research proposal, and 3) prepare a 2016/2017 seed grant and/or extramural research proposal.  Investigators without extramural funding experience are encouraged to take advantage of this planning grant opportunity (and other internal research grant funds available from most Nebraska campuses and institutions).  Researchers with extensive grant portfolios are encouraged to use this

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[1] The award budget is funded with $1,000,000 from Nebraska EPSCoR and $1,400,000 from the University of Nebraska.  All awards are subject to funding availability and determinations of application suitability.

funding source, in conjunction with a seed grant, to help plan Center and other large-scale grant applications.

### Formed/Forming Team Seed Grants

[*Up to $150,000 total over two years*; *~4 awards for FY16 and ~6 awards in the FY17 FfH RFA*]

Formed/Forming Team Grants are designed to enhance research collaborations among PIs that have had some, but modest, levels of previous collaboration. These teams, for example, may not have systematically worked together on a single proposal and/or have only recently identified additional members. Teams receiving these grants must have a clear goal to prepare applications to an existing or announced future federal or foundation funding opportunity (award types of at least $200,000 per year). The purpose of this grant type is to establish a collaborative research team that is actively generating knowledge/preliminary data critical to developing or enhancing a nationally competitive extramural funding proposal.

### Team Strengthening Seed Grants

[*Up to $300,000 total over two years*; *~2 awards for FY16 and ~2 awards in the FY17 FfH RFA*]

Team Strengthening Grants are designed to build upon existing research collaborations among grant-successful research PIs, although the addition of new members to fill expertise gaps is encouraged. Teams receiving these grants must have a clear goal to prepare applications to a significant existing or announced future funding opportunity (award types of ~$400,000 per year and above). The purpose of this grant type is to strengthen existing research collaborations in order to establish a foundation from which the team will better compete for significant extramural research funding.

**General Eligibility**: Assistant, Associate or Full Professors and equivalent-rank scientists employed by any Nebraska-based college, university, or research organization are eligible to submit funding applications as Principal Investigators (PI) if they have a record of extramurally funded research as a PI or co-PI. PIs may apply for no more than one planning grant and one seed grant; there is no limit on their participation as Co-PIs.

**Collaboration Requirements:** A PI employed by the University of Nebraska must identify at least one collaborator affiliated with another campus (UNK, UNL,[2] UNMC and UNO); if appropriate, collaborations with other Nebraska research institutions are encouraged. A faculty member or equivalent-rank PI not employed by the University of Nebraska must identify at least one collaborator affiliated with another research institution in Nebraska; if appropriate, collaborations with University of Nebraska affiliated faculty are encouraged. Collaboration arrangements are to be driven by mutual interest and scientific need.

**Retreat**: A retreat to facilitate campus and statewide collaboration will be held on Friday November 13th 2015 at the Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center in Lincoln. Potential PIs/team leaders wishing to be funding-eligible must attend unless special dispensation is granted; identified team members (PIs/Co-PIs) and others looking to participate

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[2] The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) is part of the UNL campus.

on planning or seed grants are <u>strongly</u> encouraged to attend. Those considering leading a seed grant will need to provide a paragraph describing their concept by the November 2$^{nd}$ registration deadline; potential planning grant applicants will need to indicate their general topic of interest and disciplinary expertise. Prospective seed grant PIs will be expected to make a brief presentation on their concept and planning grant topic discussions will be facilitated by faculty leaders and research administrators.

**Deadlines:**

Retreat Registration/Preliminary Topic Identification:
> Received by Monday, November 2$^{nd}$ 2015 - 5 PM Central Time

Application: **Contact your Sponsored Programs Office (or equivalent)**
> [Applications must be received from each institution's sponsored programs office
> by Friday, January 8$^{th}$ 2016 – 5 PM Central Time]

**Application Format and Content:** Applications (including references, tables, and figures) must not the exceed the page limits specified for the grant-type. Type size must be 12 points or larger and margins must be at least 1 inch on all four sides. Approvals must be obtained from appropriate campus/institutional administrators in a format sufficient for the submitting institution to certify that such approvals have been obtained; a signature page is not required. By submitting an application, each institution certifies that all named PIs, Co-PIs, and the institution itself agree to waive all rights of access to the identity of person(s) who may conduct internal or external peer evaluations of their application. Proposals and a letter of submittal for each application attesting to full institutional approval will only be accepted from the designated research or sponsored programs office at a Nebraska institution. Each application must consist of a single PDF file, and should include the following:

1. **Submittal Letter/Cover Page**
   **[The submittal letter is completed by the campus Sponsored Programs Office, not the PI.]**

   All applications should include a submittal letter/cover page prepared by the sponsored programs office of the submitting institution. It should include the:
   - Project Title;
   - Grant-type being applied for (Planning Grant, Formed/Forming Team Grant, Team Strengthening Grant);
   - Name and contact information for the PI;
   - Listing of all Co-PIs and their institutional affiliations;
   - Total funds requested and project duration (not to exceed 2 years);
   - A confirmatory statement that the application has received PI/Co-PI and institutional approval to submit the funding application in accordance with conditions outlined in this RFA;
   - A confirmatory statement that required regulatory and compliance reviews (Protections for Human Subjects, Vertebrate Animals, Biosafety, etc.) are complete and approved, or are pending. Specifically indicate which approvals are still pending approval.

### 2. Project Description

*For Planning Grant Applications:*
- Title
- Introduction/Summary (not to exceed 300 words)
- Project Narrative with the following elements (not to exceed 3 pages):
  - ✓ **Topic area(s)** to be explored for future research collaborations.
  - ✓ **Preliminary** assessment of the a) potential for collaboration, b) known state-wide expertise, and c) likely extramural grant fundability.
  - ✓ **Approach.**  Describe how researchers involved in the planning effort intend to identify specific research questions, interact with potential funding agencies and program leaders, and build/identify collaborations in Nebraska to position those involved to prepare a 2016/2017 seed grant and/or extramural research proposal. Fundable activities include research retreats (with external speakers), planning/proposal preparation meetings, travel to funders, and grant preparation workshops.

*For Seed Grant Applications:*
- Title
- Abstract/Summary (not to exceed 300 words)
- Project Narrative with the following elements *(not to exceed 8 pages)*
  - ✓ **Long-Term Scientific Objectives.**  Clearly state the research question(s) to be addressed in an eventual federal or other extramural grant application.
  - ✓ **Specific Aims**.  Clearly state the research question(s) and, as appropriate, the hypothesis to be tested for this collaborative application.
  - ✓ **Significance.**  Describe how both the long-term approach and achievement of the specific objectives will address a scientific problem or barrier relative to Food for Health, why the overall work represents an innovative approach, and how anticipated achievements will increase scientific knowledge leading to improved human health.  Describe why the proposed work is significant to science and society.
  - ✓ **Approach**. Describe the approach to be used to achieve the specific aims outlined in the proposal, including an integrated plan for achieving the broader impacts/societal benefits expected by most funding agencies.
  - ✓ **Collaborative Roles**.  Clearly indicate the <u>scientific</u> role(s) and expectations for the PI and each collaborator (Co-PI).  Outline the existing facilities available to each participant, and the resources that will be made available if the project is funded.  Describe any existing

collaborations and how they will be strengthened, and how new Co-PIs will be integrated into the research team. Outline the approaches that the PI and research team will take to ensure impactful and meaningful collaboration, data sharing, data management, and quality reviews/accountability.

✓ **Future Funding.** Describe the specific extramural funding program(s) and grant-types to be applied for by the collaborating researchers. Furthermore, describe how achieving the specific aims outlined in this proposal will help make the collaborators' future extramural research proposals more competitive.

3. **Budget**[3]

Complete the project budget form (attached to this RFA and available as an Excel spreadsheet from http://nebraska.edu/Collaboration) and a one-page budget justification. Personnel expenses aggregated on the budget form must be justified individually.

- F&A costs are not allowable expenses.
- Academic year salary for PIs and Co-PIs are not allowable expenses. Summer salary expenses (0.5 month maximum) are only allowed for a PI without summer support (no summer salary is allowed for any Co-PI); no salary savings can be accrued.

4. **PI/Co-PI CVs**

*For Planning Grant Applications:*
- Include 2-page CVs for each PI/Co-PI. In-lieu of Co-PI CVs, a brief bibliography paragraph can be supplied. There is no expectation that all potential collaborators be identified prior to a planning grant award. Each CV should follow a consistent format.

*For Seed Grant Applications:*
- Include 2-page CVs for the PI and each Co-PI. Each CV should follow a consistent format.

5. *Timeline*

Describe key project milestones and when they will occur. Include specific plans for grant proposal submissions.

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[3] Nebraska EPSCoR funding may be used to support expenditures at any Nebraska-based research institution/campus; funding from the University of Nebraska can only be used to support eligible expenditures on its campuses, although fee-for-service contracts with non-Nebraska or other Nebraska institutions are allowed.

6. **External Reviewer List**

*For Planning Grant Applications:*
- No listing of external reviewers will be required.  Proposals will be assessed by a small committee composed of members of Nebraska's scientific community.  <u>Indicate if proposal reviewers should be asked to sign a non-disclosure form prior to receiving your proposal for review</u>.

*For Seed Grant Applications:*
- Provide the names, professional affiliations, and <u>correct contact information</u> (address and email) for four experts who may be recruited as external reviewers for the proposed project.  <u>Indicate if proposal reviewers should be asked to sign a non-disclosure form prior to receiving your proposal for review</u>.  By providing these names, the PI confirms that none of these experts has a conflict of interest with the application's PI and Co-PIs.  For the purpose of this application, conflict of interest is defined as having received grant funding together, jointly published articles with fewer than 20 co-authors, and/or served as PhD or MS (or equivalent) degree mentors/mentees.

**Application Submission Requirements:** <u>PIs should contact their Sponsored Programs Office (or equivalent) for the institutional receipt deadline associated with this program</u>.  [Funding applications must be submitted from the recognized research office of the PI's institution of record via email to David Jackson <djackson@nebraska.edu> with a CC to Jeanne Holdren <jholdren@nebraska.edu>. Applications received after the published deadline, or those submitted directly by PIs, will not be accepted.]

**General Criteria for Evaluation:**  Applications will first be evaluated to determine if all RFA guidelines have been met, including (but not limited to) retreat participation, general eligibility, formatting, collaboration requirements, budget amounts, and Food for Health topic alignment. For Team Strengthening Grants, CVs will be evaluated to verify existing collaborations (shared publications and/or grants). For those applications that meet stated RFA submission criteria, at least two external reviews will be solicited.  Reviewers will be asked to rate the application(s) they receive on the following criteria:  a) Merit and relevance (30 pts.), b) Potential to receive future extramural support (30 pts.), c) Appropriate leveraging of statewide expertise (20 pts.), and d) Potential to achieve short-term stated aims (20 pts.).  Final funding decisions will be made by the Executive Vice President and Provost and the Executive Director of Nebraska EPSCoR.  Funding announcements are expected to be made in March 2016.

**Post Award Management, Obligations, and Reporting Requirements**:  PIs will be required to submit a brief project initiation report three months after award; while the grant remains active, programmatic progress and detailed financial reports will be due 30 days after each award anniversary.  A final report will be due 90 days after the award's termination date.  As the purpose of this program is to enhance Nebraska's research capacity and competitiveness,

submission of significant high-quality extramural research grants is a condition of all awards. Satisfactory progress and adherence to award conditions will be required for access to current and future award funds from the University of Nebraska.  All reports will be shared with applicable campus/institution research offices.  This program is administered by the University of Nebraska's Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.[4]

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[4] RFA and award management questions should be directed Dr. David Jackson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (djackson@nebraska.edu).

| (Proposal Title) | Year 1 | Year 2 (If applicable) | Total Requested |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| A.  PERSONNEL (TOTAL COSTS, INCLUDING BENEFITS)<br>    (SHOW HEADCOUNT  (XX) AND FTEs (Y.YY) IN BRACKETS) | | | |
| 1.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) PI and CO-Pis | | | |
| 2.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) OTHER PROFESSIONALS (TECHNICIAN, PROGRAMMER, ETC.) | | | |
| 3.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) GRADUATE STUDENTS | | | |
| 4.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS | | | |
| 5.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) SECRETARIAL – CLERICAL | | | |
| 6.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) POST DOCTORAL ASSOCIATES | | | |
| 7.  (XX, Y.YY FTE) OTHER:        (specify) | | | |
| **TOTAL PERSONNEL** | $   - | $   - | $   - |
| | | | |
| B.  EQUIPMENT >$5,000 (LIST ITEM AND DOLLAR AMOUNT)<br>    (Combine multi-component systems on a single line) | | | |
| 1. _____  $_____ | | | |
| 2. _____  $_____ | | | |
| 3. _____  $_____ | | | |
| 4. _____  $_____ | | | |
| 5. _____  $_____ | | | |
| **TOTAL EQUIPMENT** | $   - | $   - | $   - |
| | | | |
| C.  TRAVEL  1.  DOMESTIC (INCLUDE CANADA, MEXICO, AND U.S. POSSESSIONS) | | | |
|          2.  FOREIGN | | | |
| **TOTAL TRAVEL** | $   - | $   - | $   - |
| | | | |
| D.  OTHER COSTS | | | |
| 1.  MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES | | | |
| 2.  PUBLICATION AND COMMUNICATION COSTS (including telecommunication, copying, etc.) | | | |
| 3.  SERVICE / MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS | | | |
| 4.  COMPUTER SERVICES | | | |
| 5.  OTHER (PLEASE EXPLAIN) | | | |
| | | | |
| **TOTAL OTHER COSTS** | $   - | $   - | $   - |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **E.  TOTAL REQUEST (A THROUGH  D)** | $   - | $   - | $   - |
| | | | |
| | | | |