

**USDA - Agricultural Research Service**  
**Faculty Research Fellowships for Capacity Building**  
**at 1890 Land-Grant Universities**

**FY 2018 Program Information**

*Application Deadline:*      **August 31, 2017**

*ARS Point of Contact:*      **Robert C. MacDonald**  
**Coordinator for Partnerships and Grants**  
**Office of National Programs**  
**(301) 504-1184**  
**robert.macdonald@ars.usda.gov**



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

## Program Description

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is committed to enhancing the agricultural research capacity of the 1890s Land-Grant Universities (LGUs) by partnering with them in a program offering research and training opportunities to career-track faculty at 1890 LGUs through the award of faculty research fellowships. Each 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship award will provide up to \$100,000 to support expenses (e.g., salary, living expenses, and research costs) for a Fellow during a 6- to 12-month residency at an ARS laboratory to conduct cooperative research with ARS. ARS will invest up to \$500,000 each year into this program. Only one fellowship may be awarded to an institution per year.

The 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship program will provide mutual benefit to the 1890 LGUs and ARS. 1890 LGU faculty will have the opportunity to work alongside ARS scientists in established research programs, develop new research skills and techniques, co-author research papers from successful collaborative research, and demonstrate increased capacity to develop scientifically competitive research. ARS scientists will benefit from bringing new, talented partners into our research programs and establishing new collaborative research with 1890 LGUs. The ARS-LGU research partners may identify opportunities to develop more long-term funding ideas to sustain their research relationships beyond the term of the Fellowship, which could include the 1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants (CBG) Program offered by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

ARS will accept applications from faculty at any of the 1890s LGUs. A maximum of three applications may be submitted by each 1890 LGU per competition. The application will be co-authored by:

- A career-track 1890 LGU faculty member that:
  - Has been employed for a minimum of 5 years in their current position, and
  - Is approved for fellowship leave by his/her home institution; and
  
- An ARS scientist who:
  - Will be the Fellow's research cooperator and host,
  - Has successfully completed the prescribed probationary period, is in good standing relative to performance, and has their supervisor's approval,
  - Has adequate facilities and other resources needed to host the 1890 LGU faculty member; and
  - Has worked with the 1890 LGU faculty member to identify a research project that is complementary and relevant to their base-funded research.

ARS is USDA's chief scientific in-house research Agency and conducts research to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and provide information access and dissemination to:

- Ensure high-quality, safe food, and other agricultural products;
- Assess the nutritional needs of Americans;
- Sustain a competitive agricultural economy;
- Enhance the natural resource base and the environment; and
- Provide economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society as a whole.

The ARS website ([www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)) is a valuable resource for 1890 LGU scientists in identifying ARS research projects and locations of interest.

Successful applications will:

- Propose innovative research on some aspect of agriculture or food relevant to ARS' mission and programs,
- Have potential benefits and impact for the citizens of the 1890 LGU's state and beyond,
- Strengthen the expertise and research capacity being brought to the project by the 1890 LGU applicant, and
- Enhance the scope or impact of the ARS host scientist's research project.

Funds will be awarded to successful applicants by the addition of funds to the ARS host scientist's research project. The host scientist will then establish a Non-Assistance Cooperative Agreement (NACA) with the 1890 LGU to finalize the agreement for the full amount of the fellowship leave. The fellowship leave may not exceed 1 year in duration.

*Because this program is being offered late in the fiscal year, all must be prepared to execute agreements immediately upon notification of selection, **which could occur with only 2 weeks remaining in the fiscal year.** The Fellowship need not start immediately, but must begin no later than September 1, 2018. The approximate starting date and ending date of work by the 1890 faculty member on the proposed work must be included in the application*

## Application and Submission Instructions

Proposals are submitted internally through ARS; there is not a Grants.gov application. An application must be developed jointly by the interested career-track 1890 LGU faculty member and his/her prospective ARS scientist host, and submitted by the ARS scientist's Area Director by the application deadline. All applications must include the following:

- A 3-5 page application narrative organized according to the following outline:
  1. The approximate starting date and ending date of work by the 1890 faculty member on the proposed work;
  2. The objectives of the work to be done by the 1890 LGU faculty member during their fellowship leave;
  3. The materials and methods required to accomplish the proposed research;

4. The resources currently available at the ARS location to support the proposed research;
5. The expected outputs and impacts of the proposed research;
6. The benefits of the proposed cooperative research to U.S. agriculture, the 1890 LGU, ARS, and to the parent ARS Current Research Information System (CRIS) project;
7. The project number for the parent ARS CRIS project; and
8. A description of how the 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship will enhance the capabilities of the applicant, including the accomplishment of future research goals.

This narrative is to be used as the Statement of Work for the NACA with a minimum of alteration.

- A letter from the authorized official of the 1890 LGU that:
  - Documents institutional approval of submission of the application and of the proposed research;
  - Describes the particular arrangements at the 1890 LGU with respect to salary and date and duration of the fellowship leave;
  - Recognizes the full-time nature of the fellowship leave, including agreement that the 1890 LGU faculty member will be conducting the research at the ARS location and thus will be minimally engaged in their normal faculty duties; and
  - Stipulates the application is approved as one of no more than three applications from the 1890 LGU to this program for fiscal year 2018.

*Note that the 1890 LGU does not submit the application to ARS. The proposal is submitted internally in ARS. This is not a grants program and does not involve Grants.gov.*

- The curriculum vitae of the 1890 LGU faculty member.
- A REE-454 budget spreadsheet, which will be used as part of an ensuing NACA.
  - Requested funds may not exceed \$100,000 and can be used to support:
    - The 1890 LGU faculty member's salary and benefits;
    - Travel to and from and residence expenses at the ARS research location;
    - Other travel costs appropriate to the proposed research; and
    - Research costs associated with the proposed research.
  - Funds to be awarded to the 1890 LGU to cover salary, research costs, and other expenses must be listed in the "ARS to Reimburse" column of the REE-454.  
*Note that all research materials to be purchased from 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship funds must be purchased by the 1890 LGU.*
  - Any additional funds to be supplied by ARS in addition to the 1890 Faculty Research Fellowship funds must be listed in the "ARS In-House" column of the REE-454.
  - The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program fee will be charged on the NACA and may be included in the budget.

- Budget requirements of 7 CFR 550 for NACAs:
  - Indirect costs are prohibited.
  - The 20 percent matching requirement has been waived by ARS for this program.

Completed applications must be forwarded by the appropriate Research Leader to their Area Office. The Area Office must then send all approved applications via e-mail to [robert.macdonald@ars.usda.gov](mailto:robert.macdonald@ars.usda.gov) by the program deadline.

## Application Review and Selection

All applications will be screened to ensure they satisfy the requirements as described above. Those that do not will be returned without review.

Applications will be reviewed by a panel composed of the four ARS Office of National Program Deputy Administrators or their designated National Program Leader substitutes. Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the ARS mission;
- Ability to further the development of the 1890 LGU faculty applicant;
- Scientific merit of the proposed research; and
- Relevance and utility to the base-funded research of the ARS host scientist.

The ARS Administrator will make the final selection of proposals for funding based on the panel's evaluations.

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