

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

EXPERT INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT - FY 2007

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on April 30, 2007 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Interregional Research Project #4 Minor Crop Pest Management Program RFA.

PART I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Pursuant to 7 USC 450i Section (c)(1)(B), the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), is authorized to make competitive grants to State agricultural experiment stations, land-grant colleges and universities, research foundations established by land-grant colleges and universities, colleges and universities receiving funds under the Act of October 10, 1962 (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.), and accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine for the purpose of facilitating or expanding ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research programs that--

- (i) promote excellence in research on a regional and national level;
- (ii) promote the development of regional research centers;
- (iii) promote the research partnership between the Department of Agriculture, colleges and universities, research foundations, and State agricultural experiment stations for regional research efforts; and
- (iv) facilitate coordination and cooperation of research among States through regional research grants.

It is anticipated that grants will be made to support high priority research in the development of expert systems that help guide, demonstrate and multiply impacts of USDA supported Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the Expert Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Decision Support System (EIPMDSS) program is to support development of expert systems that help guide, demonstrate and multiply impacts of USDA supported IPM programs.

CSREES provides support for a portfolio of IPM research, education, and extension programs that include but are not limited to: the Regional IPM Centers (RIPMC); the Extension IPM Program (ExIPM); the Regional Integrated Pest Management Program (RIPM); the Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP); the National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN); Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4); and several other integrated IPM programs. Other USDA agencies support additional programs such as pesticide use data gathering, invasive species monitoring, and environmental effects assessments. The goals of these IPM programs are: 1) Improve cost benefit analyses when adopting IPM Practices, 2) Reduce potential human health risks from pests and related management strategies, and 3) Minimize adverse environmental effects from pests and related management strategies. Both the efficiency and effectiveness of these individual programs have historically been increased by the expert systems made available to the participants. The EIPMDSS created and maintained by the successful applicant will help these programs establish and communicate IPM research, education, and extension priorities; allow a diverse group of stakeholders to obtain access to selected program outputs; compile LOGIC model based program reports; and synthesize program impacts.

C. Program Area Description

For the purposes of this request for applications (RFA), the PROGRAM NAME is Expert IPM Decision Support System and the PROGRAM CODE is MY.

1. Objectives for EIPMDSS

Develop and/or maintain expert systems that:

- (a) Deliver state of the art IPM information to a wide variety of stakeholders (particularly information from CSREES supported IPM program products);

- (b) Design and/or maintain LOGIC model based reporting software that helps selected CSREES supported IPM Research Education, and Economic (REE) programs compile program/project reports;
- (c) Provide web based networking tools for IPM scientists;
- (d) Synthesize CSREES supported and other IPM program impact information; and
- (e) Serve as a key reference and decision support tool in setting and pursuing IPM program priorities.

2. Critical Elements in an Application

Applications must fulfill **both** of the following requirements:

- (a) Demonstrate an ongoing cooperative working relationship with the aforementioned CSREES IPM Research, Education, and Economic (REE) programs and/or describe how such a relationship will be established and maintained; and
- (b) Describe how proposed objectives and approach will achieve EIPMDSS objectives and goals as described in Part I, Section B of this RFA.

Examples of funded projects can be found at:

<http://cris.csrees.usda.gov/cgi-bin/starfinder/0?path=fastlink1.txt&id=anon&pass=&search=gc=my%20AND%20gy%3E2002&format=WEBTITLESG>

PART II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates awarding a single cooperative agreement for approximately \$146,000 to support EIPMDSS applications in fiscal year (FY) 2007. CSREES will continue to be substantially involved with the funded project through mentorship, oversight, and the active technical assistance role of CSREES staff in all related CSREES IPM REE programs.

B. Types of Applications

Only new applications are to be submitted in response to this RFA.

C. Scientific Peer Review

Subsection (c)(5) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)(5)) requires applicants to conduct scientific peer review of their proposed research activities in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary prior to the Secretary making a grant award under this authority. Regulations implementing this

requirement are set forth in 7 CFR part 3400.20.

The regulations impose the following requirements:

(1) Scientific peer review. Prior to the award of a standard or continuation grant by CSREES, any proposed project shall have undergone a review arranged by the grantee. For research projects, such review must be a scientific peer review conducted in accordance with 7 CFR 3400.21.

(2) Credible and independent review. A review arranged by the grantee must provide for a credible and independent assessment of the proposed project. A credible review is one that provides an appraisal of technical quality and relevance sufficient for an organizational representative to make an informed judgment as to whether the proposal is appropriate for submission for Federal support. To provide for an independent review, such review may include USDA employees, but should not be conducted solely by USDA employees.

(3) Notice of completion and retention of records. A notice of completion of the review shall be conveyed in writing to CSREES as part of the Other Attachments (Field 11. of the R&R Other Project Information Form). The written notice constitutes certification by the applicant that a review in compliance with these regulations has occurred. Applicants are not required to submit results of the review to CSREES; however, proper documentation of the review process and results should be retained by the applicant. **Please note: award funds cannot be released until the Scientific Peer Review Certification is received (if required).**

PART III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, land-grant colleges and universities, research foundations established by land grant colleges and universities, colleges and universities receiving funds under the Act of October 10, 1962 (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.), and accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine, for the purpose of facilitating or expanding ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research programs.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Awards made under this subsection shall be made without regard to matching funds.

PART IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted to CSREES via Grants.gov in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov.

If the organization is not prepared, the AOR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. 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-CSREES-SRGP-000610** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts V and VI of the document entitled “**CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: [A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)**” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the portable document format requirements in Part III section 3 of the Guide.

1. R&R Other Project Information Form.

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form) – **PDF Attachment.**

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of EIPMDSS.

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form) – **PDF Attachment.**

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 8 pages of written text and up to 3 additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (11 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Applicants should provide the following program-specific information in their applications:

- i) Introduction: Include information on the following in the order identified:
 - (1) Summarize the work to be performed in non-technical terms.
 - (2) Concisely state the goal(s) of the proposed project;
 - (3) Describe how this project will build upon or expand related work or programs;
 - (4) Describe how the work on this project relates to the experience of key project personnel;
 - (5) Describe the involvement of stakeholders in developing project objectives and implementing results; and
 - (6) Define the target audience and end users of this project.
- ii) Objectives:
 - (1) Provide a brief review of the goal(s) stated in the Introduction; and
 - (2) Present a clear, concise set of project objectives.
- iii) Methods: Describe the procedures by objective for the proposed effort, include:
 - (1) Techniques and methods to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project; and
 - (2) Timeline for proposed research with milestones and verifiable indicators, which demonstrate progress.
- iv) Networking plan
 - (1) Provide a credible, detailed plan for the successful networking with IPM programs.

2. Supplemental Information Form.

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the **program code name: Expert IPM Decision Support System**; and the **program code: MY**.

b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 4. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is not required under this RFA. Do not complete and submit a conflict of interest list.

C. Submission Date and Time

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business on April 30, 2007 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AOR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified at the end of the RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

CSREES has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowed under EIPMDSS Program funding.

PART V-APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

The review of EIPMDSS applications will be conducted in accordance with CSREES proposal merit review procedures utilizing reviewers within CSREES to ensure complete, unbiased and professional reviews. Reviewers will be selected based on experience in research, extension or other types of program management; knowledge of the agricultural

sector, and an appreciation for the need to provide expert assistance to facilitate innovative crop protection solutions for minor and specialty crop producers. It should be noted that the CSREES EIPMDSS National Program Leader will not be one of the reviewers in the review and evaluation process.

C. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

D. Current Research Information System (CRIS) Reports

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

PART VI - AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact William Hoffman: USDA-CSREES - National Program Leader - Plant and Animal Systems; Stop 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250 - 2220; telephone: (202) 401-1112; fax: (202) 401-4888; e-mail: whoffman@csrees.usda.gov.