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New World Screwworm Grand Challenge Fiscal Year 2026 Cooperative/Interagency Agreements

Fiscal Year 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-APHIS-10025-OA000000-26-0001

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(1) BASIC INFORMATION

Federal Agency Name: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

Funding Opportunity Title: New World Screwworm Grand Challenge Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Assistance Listing Number: 10.025

APHIS is making up to \$100,000,000 available to combat NWS and prevent its northward spread. An estimated 20 awards will be offered, although APHIS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

Awards are not anticipated to exceed \$5,000,000; however, APHIS reserves the right to award proposals in excess of \$5,000,000 if the proposal significantly contributes to the prevention of NWS' northward spread. This anticipated award amount should not deter new innovations; Major projects with a demonstrable ability to rapidly advance animal health outcomes and/or delay the spread of NWS will be considered in excess of this amount. You can See [Appendix I](#) for funding priority topics.

APHIS may award less than the requested amount for a project. In these cases, applicants may accept or decline the award that is offered. If applicants accept a reduced funding level, applicants will be asked to submit a revised application that addresses reviewer concerns and aligns with the award amount. APHIS will provide additional guidance to applicants in these situations.

Key Dates: Applications must be received through [ezFedGrants](#) for non-Federal applicants or via email to NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov for Federal applicants by February 23, 2026 11:59 PM ET. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Anticipated Award Start Date: APHIS anticipates that work covered under these agreements will start no sooner than May 1, 2026, and no later than June 1, 2026. Projects will end no later than 2 years after the start date, unless otherwise approved in writing by APHIS.

Period of Performance: Projects should be completed within 2 years unless an extension has been approved in writing by APHIS. Pre-award costs and activities are not authorized under this program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal Health Protection Inspection Service announces this funding opportunity to support the sweeping plan to combat New World screwworm (NWS) as described in the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's August 15, 2025, press release, titled [USDA Announces Sweeping Plans to Protect the United States from New World Screwworm](#). Through this Grand Challenge, APHIS is making up to \$100,000,000 available to combat NWS and prevent its northward spread.

APHIS is making rapid progress on the construction of additional sterile insect production facilities with full capacity of 300 million sterile flies per week expected to come online in March 2029. Through the Grand Challenge, APHIS hopes to identify both projects that will augment our rapid response to the growing threat of NWS to serve as an interim step while production increases, but also long-term investments that expand our ability to respond to the parasite now and into the future – technologies that, perhaps, could have applicability with other animal disease response programs.

APHIS will support projects that enhance sterile NWS fly production, develop novel NWS traps and lures, develop and increase understanding of NWS therapeutics/treatments in animals, or develop other tools to bolster preparedness or response to NWS. The funding priority topics are described in more detail in [Appendix 1](#), and funds will be awarded to eligible entities described in [Section 2](#).

For questions about the NWS Grand Challenge program, this funding opportunity, required documents, or the ezFedGrants application process, please refer to the detailed information provided on the [NWS Grand Challenge](#) webpage or contact NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov.

(2) ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

NWS Grand Challenge eligible applicants are:

1. Colleges and universities, including university research foundations
2. State, national, allied, or regional producer organizations with direct or significant economic interest in the control of NWS
3. State, national, allied, or regional veterinary organizations or specialty boards recognized by the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#)
4. Federal agencies
5. Non-profits with or without 501(c)(3) IRS status, other than Institutions of Higher Ed
6. State Departments of Agriculture
7. State emergency agencies
8. Small businesses
9. For-profit organizations other than small businesses
10. Non-domestic (non-U.S.) entities (foreign organizations) and non-domestic (non-U.S.) components of U.S. organizations
11. Tribal governments
12. Federally funded research laboratories
13. Local governments

Each application package must contain one topic/project focus only. Applicants can submit more than one application package. While individual investigators can be utilized on multiple NWS Grand Challenge project submissions, the total of an investigator's time across all awarded projects may not exceed 100 percent.

THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Application packages must meet the initial screening criteria to be eligible to receive further review. Proposals that do not meet these initial screening criteria will not receive further review. Any application package with missing or incomplete documents or forms will not be eligible to receive further review.

1. Proposals must be submitted by eligible entities with an active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in SAM.gov.
2. Proposals must address one of the funding priorities listed in Section 1 and described in detail in [Appendix 1](#).
3. All required documents and forms listed in Section 4 must (a) be included in the application package, and (b) comply with the submission instructions described in Section 5 of this announcement.
4. Proposals, including all associated documents and forms, must be received on or before the proposal submission deadline. Proposals received after the submission deadline will not be eligible to receive further review.

COST SHARING

Cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not required for NWS Grand Challenge projects. If an applicant includes voluntary committed cost sharing as part of a proposal and it is accepted by APHIS, the commitment of funds becomes legally binding. The cost share must be included in the Work and Financial Plans, reported on Forms SF-424 and quarterly updates on Form SF-425, and is subject to audit.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Funding restrictions, including unallowable costs, and cost restrictions, are provided in the [2 CFR Part 200](#) and described in [2 CFR Subpart E](#), Cost Principles – General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost.

Funds may not be used in any way as prohibited by applicable law or regulations, to include [2 CFR 200](#) and [2 CFR 400](#). Awards issued pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, consistent with the statutory authority for the award.

Capital expenses, such as the purchase of equipment, not entirely attributable to this award, must be prorated.

No funds may be used to pay indirect costs of more than 10 percent of the total direct cost of the agreement on cooperative agreements or similar arrangements for nonprofit institutions. Nonprofit institutions may include both private and public organizations, including colleges, universities, schools, hospitals, and others. Various statutes may limit the indirect cost rate that applies to a particular recipient, including but not limited to Public Law 118-42 (Mar. 9, 2024), Division B, Sec. 704 (as extended by Public Law 119-4, Division A, Sec. 1101).

(3) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program Goals: The goal of this program is to prevent the northward spread of NWS by supporting projects that strengthen detection, control, and eradication readiness.

Program Objectives: (1) increase the efficiency and performance of sterile fly production; (2) improve surveillance and detection capabilities through development of modern traps, lures, or tools that differentiate sterile and wild flies; (3) expand treatment, therapeutics, and preventive tools for livestock and wildlife, including products advancing toward U.S. regulatory pathways; and/or (4) enhance operational preparedness through improved dispersal methodologies, repellents, ecological models, or wildlife surveillance approaches. Expected outcomes include measurable improvements in sterile fly production capacity, validated tools that improve early detection, and products or data that directly support treatment or rapid response operational needs.

Expected Outcomes: Projects funded under this announcement are expected to generate outcomes that measurably strengthen the nation's ability to prevent, detect, and respond to NWS. Expected results include innovations or improvements that increase program efficiency, reduce operational risk, or expand readiness and response capabilities. These may include:

- New or improved tools, technologies, or methods that enhance early detection and surveillance.
- Increased efficiency, reliability, or scalability of sterile fly production and release.
- Evidence-based products, practices, or treatments that reduce animal health impacts.
- Data, models, or decision-support tools that improve planning, monitoring, and operational response.

Outcomes should be practical, measurable, and usable by APHIS and partners to support rapid response and maintain effective barriers that prevent NWS establishment in the United States.

Performance Goals: Performance goals, indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection will depend on the priority topic or topics addressed and will be tailored to the specific project. Upon selection for funding, APHIS will consult with recipients to ensure they identify appropriate performance goals, indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection to successfully implement the project as outlined in the Work Plan.

Funding Priorities: APHIS will support projects that:

Topic 1: Enhance sterile NWS fly production.

Topic 2: Develop novel NWS traps and lures.

Topic 3: Develop and increase understanding of NWS therapeutic/treatments (i.e. products that could treat, prevent, or control NWS) for animals and that could be stockpiled and used in animals should NWS reach the United States.

Topic 4: Develop other tools to bolster preparedness or response to NWS.

Type of Assistance Instrument: Awards to non-Federal recipients will be funded via cooperative agreements. Awards to Federal entities will be funded via interagency agreements.

Cooperative agreements are commonly used in research and development projects, where the government seeks to foster innovation and collaboration with external entities. In addition, cooperative agreements must include substantial involvement by the funding entity to assist in the completion of the goals and objectives of the work. Substantial involvement means APHIS Program Managers will consult with selected recipients to ensure they identify appropriate performance goals, indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection to successfully implement the project as outlined in the Work Plan. In addition to reviewing performance and financial reports on a quarterly basis, APHIS Program Managers will have discussions or meetings with the awardee to monitor project progress and provide technical guidance, as needed.

COST GUIDANCE

All APHIS awards are subject to general terms and conditions, cost principles, allowable and unallowable costs, direct and indirect costs, cost sharing, and other considerations as described and defined in:

- [2 CFR 200](#)
- [2 CFR Subpart E](#), Cost Principles – General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost
- [APHIS General Terms and Conditions](#)
- [USDA General Terms and Conditions for Federal Awards](#)

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The NWS Grand Challenge is authorized under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8310 and 8316).

(4) APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Non-Federal applicants must submit all application materials electronically using the [ezFedGrants](#) system.

Non-domestic applicants that cannot validate a Login.gov account maybe submit the complete application package by the deadline to NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov

Federal Applicants should refer to [Section 5](#) for application submission information.

We urge all applicants to submit their application packages early and to complete the following activities as soon as possible:

1. Always maintain a current and active System for Awards Management (SAM.GOV) account during which the entity has an active Federal award as a recipient or an application under consideration.
2. Register for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) within SAM.gov and keep current,
3. Create a Login.gov Account,
4. Register and establish an [ezFedGrants](#) account. Instructions are available in [Appendix 2](#) and on APHIS' [How to Apply for APHIS Funding: Getting Started web page](#).

OBTAINING AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

Applicants can find all application materials on the [ezFedGrants](#) website or the [Grants.gov](#) website by searching Assistance Listing Number 10.025 or Funding Opportunity Number USDA-APHIS-10025-OA000000-26-001.

Application materials and additional information is also available on the USDA APHIS [NWS Grand Challenge](#) webpage.

CONTENT AND FORM OF THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

For **Non-Federal Applicants**, the application package must include the documents listed below. Note that application documents must be in PDF format before they can be uploaded in [ezFedGrants](#) . The total size of all PDF attachments cannot exceed 20MB.

- Project proposal [WORK PLAN](#).
- Project proposal [FINANCIAL PLAN](#).
- Qualifications and relevant experience of the principal investigator and lead technical experts.
- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance". Applicant completes this in [ezFedGrants](#)
- SF-424A, "Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs". Applicants complete this in ezFedGrants
- SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, for applications exceeding \$100,000, if there are activities to report
- Certification Regarding Lobbying for applications exceeding \$100,000
- Copy of State's Intergovernmental review of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) letter per Executive Order 12372, as applicable
- Copy of the current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), if applicable.

For **Federal Applicants**, the application package must include:

- Project proposal [WORK PLAN](#).
- Project proposal [FINANCIAL PLAN](#).

Applicants should refer to [Appendix 2](#) when preparing a proposal package for submission. Any proposal with missing or incomplete documents or forms will be considered ineligible and result in a rejected application.

Project Proposal Work Plan

The NWS Grand Challenge suggested [Work Plan template](#) is available on the [NWS Grand Challenge](#)

webpage. Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to use the [Work Plan template](#). Applicants who do not use the template must include all the information requested in the template in their Work Plan; failure to include any required information requested in the template will result in an application being deemed ineligible and result in a rejected application. Work Plans must be submitted in PDF format. Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for more information about the Work Plan.

Project Proposal Financial Plan

The NWS Grand Challenge suggested [Financial Plan template](#) is available on the [NWS Grand Challenge](#) website. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use this template. Applicants who do not use the template must include all information requested in the template in their Financial Plan. Financial Plans must be submitted in PDF format.

Information in the Financial Plan **must match** the funding and budget information in the forms SF-424, SF-424A, and Work Plan. Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for more information about the Financial Plan. Make sure that every item in the Financial Plan is described with enough detailed information so that reviewers can verify that the cost is reasonable and justifiable.

Applicants may include indirect costs in the financial plan. Applicants must clearly identify the selected method used to calculate indirect costs and provide any required supporting documentation, as necessary. See [2 CFR 200.414](#) and [2 CFR 200.416](#) for more information.

(5) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

The closing date and time for receipt of proposal submissions is February 23, 2025, 11:59 PM ET. Proposals received after the submission deadline will not be considered.

Non-Federal Applicants must submit all application materials electronically using [ezFedGrants](#). We urge applicants to submit their application early.

- **To apply in the ezFedGrants system, applicants must have a Login.gov Account and have registered in ezFedGrants.** Applicants who do not already have these Login.gov and an ezFedGrants account are encouraged to **create these accounts as soon as possible**. Additional instructions for setting up these accounts are available on the APHIS' [How to Apply for APHIS Funding: Getting Started](#) web page.
- ezFedGrants will not permit applicants to apply after the deadline of February 23, 2026, 11:59 PM ET. Late application packages from non-Federal domestic entities will not be accepted through any alternative methods.
- If a non-domestic applicant cannot register in ezFedGrants, the submission of an application package that includes all required documents can be sent to NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov by the deadline of February 23, 2026, 11:59 PM ET. **Non-domestic applicants must have a SAM.gov registration with an active UEI.**
- Applicants who encounter problems with the ezFedGrants application process may contact NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov— **at least 48 hours before the deadline** — for additional assistance with applying to this funding opportunity. Emails sent less than 48 hours before the deadline do not guarantee a response.
- States that are required to comply with Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, will need to include a waiver or approval response letter from the State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Check the Intergovernmental Review (SPOC List) for the most current list of required States for APHIS Assistance Listing 10.025.

- Applications for funding should not exceed \$5,000,000 unless the proposal significantly contributes to the prevention of NWS' northward spread or addresses multiple priority topics.

Federal Applicants must submit the required application materials via email to NWS.Grand.Challenge@usda.gov by the deadline listed in this announcement.

The electronic date and time stamp from the email system will be used to determine whether Federal applications are received before the deadline.

All applications must be complete and submitted by the deadline without exception.

UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

Each applicant **must**:

- (1) Be registered in SAM.gov before submitting its application;
- (2) Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and
- (3) Continue to always maintain an active registration in SAM.GOV with current information during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

Additional instructions for SAM registration are available in [Appendix 2](#) and on APHIS' [How to Apply for APHIS Funding: Getting Started](#) web page.

OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Letters of support may be included in the application package. If included, letters of support should be uploaded in PDF format as attachments in the ezFedGrants system.
- **Applicants should not request letters of support from APHIS employees**; the NWS Grand Challenge will solicit input from APHIS experts during the review process.
- Curriculum vitae (CVs) are not required. Applicants should **briefly summarize** the relevant professional experience of the project leader(s) in the Work Plan instead of attaching CVs.
- Applicants must describe support needed from APHIS personnel to accomplish their project such as participation by APHIS personnel in events associated with the project (e.g., workshops, planning meetings) or services provided by APHIS subject matter experts (e.g., data, information, analyses) to complete the projects, to provide advice, receive and review project documents, offer comments and suggestions, track project performance, and communicate with recipients as necessary to ensure progress in accomplishing the project, identifying obstacles, and resolving concerns.
- Applicants may not use resources provided by the USDA APHIS National Veterinary Stockpile to complete their projects.

(6) APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Applications that meet the threshold eligibility criteria in [Section 2](#) will compete for available funds with all other eligible applications submitted in response to this funding opportunity announcement.

Criteria that make an application ineligible are:

- Missing the deadline
- Not including all required documents or submitting documents that are incomplete.
- Not having an active SAM account

- Not having a UEI

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be clearly written and logically describe planned activities (methods) to achieve each project objective. Project objectives must be measurable, lead to specific results, and be attainable during the period of performance. Sufficient details must be provided to demonstrate how the requested resources are essential and reasonable to accomplish the proposed tasks.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. Applicants must explicitly address these criteria in their project Work Plan.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be scored based on the relative importance of each listed criteria below in the order that they are listed. For example, project relevance will be weighted more than feasibility of success, feasibility of success will be weighted more than qualifications, and so on.

1. Project relevance (35% of score)—This criterion assesses the extent to which the proposal strongly supports and clearly addresses one of the funding priority topics. The project should provide innovative, novel and unique solutions OR fill gaps in our understanding of current solutions that addresses one of the funding priorities. Project relevance includes:
 - a. Clear, strong and direct alignment with one or more of the priority topics
 - b. Innovative, novel, and unique solutions or enhancement of existing solutions
 - c. Project outcomes and deliverables are likely to have significant impact and value to American farmers, ranchers and producers
2. Feasibility of success (25% of score)—This criterion assesses the extent to which the proposal includes a practical plan of action and technically sound approach with clear objectives and deliverables, including clear information about what will be delivered in each year of the project as well as a reasonable timeline to complete the described activities and methods. Feasibility of success includes:
 - a. Practical plan of action
 - b. Technically sound approach
 - c. Clear objectives and deliverables, including clear information about what will be delivered during the project
 - d. Reasonable timeline to complete activities
3. Qualifications (20% of score)—This criterion assesses whether the applicant (individual or team) has demonstrated the skills and experience to conduct the proposed project. This includes the adequacy of available or attainable personnel, facilities, equipment and/or resources. Qualifications include:
 - a. Applicant (individual or team) has demonstrated skills and experience to conduct the proposed project
 - b. Availability or attainability of personnel, facilities, equipment, and/or resources.
4. Cost effectiveness (20% of score)—This criterion assesses if the proposal costs (including

equipment) are considered reasonable and necessary to produce the expected outcomes and whether the proposal leverages existing resources, if available. Cost effectiveness includes:

- a. Proposal costs, including equipment, are considered reasonable and necessary to produce expected outcomes

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Agency will convene a review panel of subject matter experts nominated by APHIS to review eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described above.

To avoid potential conflicts of interest, reviewers may have no association with projects they are reviewing. In the event of a real or perceived conflict of interest, a reviewer shall recuse themselves as appropriate. The review team may seek counsel from additional subject-matter experts as appropriate.

The reviewers will ensure that the applicant can deliver the programs/activities described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. The review panel will make a recommendation list to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

If an applicant is deemed ineligible, USDA/APHIS will notify the applicant prior to commencing with evaluation of applications.

RISK REVIEW

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by [2 CFR 200.206](#), [31 USC 3321](#) and [41 USC 2313](#) to review information available through any OMB designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing a Federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently \$350,000, the Federal agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov (41 U.S.C. § 2313).

- An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available at SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by [2 CFR 200.206](#), the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

(7) AWARD NOTICES

AWARD NOTICES

USDA APHIS will announce approved projects in a press release. Successful applicants will receive email notifications shortly after, followed by award execution. Please note: press releases and email notifications do *not* authorize work to begin. Work may only start after the Notice of Award is fully signed in ezFedGrants.

Applicants selected for funding will receive detailed instructions for completing the Notice of Award in [ezFedGrants](#). The Notice of Award will include all pertinent information and requirements, including those specified in [2 CFR 200.210](#), as well as a reference to [APHIS General Terms and Conditions](#). Federal applicants will be contacted by APHIS with guidance on the steps required to establish Interagency Agreements. Applicants not selected for funding will be notified via email as soon as possible following the public announcement.

(8) POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Additional requirements that apply to successful applicants can be found at 2 CFR parts 25, 170, 180, 200, 400, 415, 417, 418, 421, and 422. **Successful applicants also must comply with the [APHIS General Terms and Conditions](#), [USDA General Terms and Conditions](#), the approved project Work Plan, and the approved project Financial Plan.**

Successful applicants, and any contracts entered into under the award, must ensure that all required geospatial data complies with USDA Department Regulation DR-3465-001 and the Geospatial Metadata Standards outlined in DM 3465-001.

Before accepting an award, applicants should thoroughly review all award documents for instructions on administration and applicable terms and conditions. By signing the Notice of Award, the recipient agrees to all conditions in this funding opportunity and any Special Terms and Conditions included in the Notice of Award.

For applicants that may need assistance with import permits or other meeting other regulatory requirements, APHIS will provide direct assistance and support to execute approved projects.

REPORTING

Quarterly performance and quarterly financial reports (SF-425) are required and must be submitted in the ezFedGrants system. The reports will be used to verify compliance with provisions of the Cooperative Agreement and the APHIS General Terms and Conditions.

The performance report should include:

- A comparison of actual accomplishments to the established goals for the period.
- The reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and
- Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

Recipients are encouraged to include photographs and other supplemental material in the performance report.

Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at [2 CFR. Part 170](#), should they be selected for funding.

Closeout

No later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance or after an amendment has been issued to closeout a USDA/APHIS financial assistance agreement, whichever comes first, recipients must submit a final financial report and final progress report detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance.

After final reports have been reviewed and approved by the Agency, and any residual amount due to the recipient or due to be returned to the Agency is disbursed, the award is subject to closeout. Acceptance of final reports by USDA/APHIS constitutes a closeout of the award with no further notice or obligation to either party. This acceptance will indicate the period of performance has expired, and any remaining funds will be returned to the awarding agency. Records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the final financial report is submitted.

PROJECT MONITORING & OUTCOME TRACKING

Project Monitoring

The project will be monitored in compliance with [2 CFR 200.329](#) and will involve a quarterly review of performance and financial reports, as well as periodic discussions of project progress with the APHIS Program Manager. APHIS Program Managers will monitor the project's progress based on the following criteria:

1. Adherence to the project objectives.
2. Adherence to project schedule.
3. Adherence to project budget.
4. Delivery of results that meet the agreement performance standards and achieve stated outcomes.

Outcome Tracking

Project outcomes will be tracked using performance measures that are tailored to the specific project. This may include developing goals, indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection as needed and aligned with the priority topic or topics addressed. Upon selection for funding, APHIS will consult with recipients to ensure they identify appropriate performance goals, indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection to successfully implement the project as outlined in the Work Plan.

OTHER INFORMATION

USDA/APHIS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control numbers for this information collection are 0503-0028. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.69 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. ***Send comments regarding this burden statement or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to APHIS.PRA@usda.gov.***

APPENDIX 1. FUNDING PRIORITY TOPICS

APHIS will consider project proposals that clearly and directly support one of the topics described below.

Topic 1: Enhance sterile New World screwworm (NWS) fly production.

This priority topic aims to increase the efficiency of SIT production. Females have long been regarded as not consequential in the reduction of wild populations due to the mating habits of the flies by gender. For SIT to be optimally effective in the shortest period, sterile male flies need to be competitive with wild-type males in addition to being released in overwhelming numbers. Because of the cost of the captive diet an arthropod is attracted to, any reduction of those diet costs will enhance program sustainability. Additionally, more flexible, safe, and effective methods of sterilization as well as improvements of currently employed irradiation methods serve a similar function of maximizing efficiency and sustainability. Projects in this topic area have completed validation studies or demonstrated proof of concept in NWS or scientifically valid proxy species.

Examples of projects on this topic could include:

- Innovating sexed fly technology to improve efficiencies in male fly production.
- Gaining efficiency in the production of sterile NWS by modernizing the infrastructure of the rearing facility.
- Improving rearing methodologies (e.g. cost-effectiveness of diet or increased shelf life of food supply, producing more flies in less space, optimize production, increase early-stage female mortality etc.) to produce more fit flies and gain efficiencies.
- Developing quality control measures for adult fly fitness.
- Innovating or improving sterilization techniques.
- Accelerating behavioral maturation of adult NWS for more competitive males.

Topic 2: Develop novel NWS traps and lures.

This priority topic aims to fuel innovation and refinement for traps and lures in the field. Indiscriminate capture of a multitude of species has often complicated and frustrated trapping efforts aimed at surveillance and a complimentary population reduction mechanism when it comes to baits. The ability to attract a specific gender and target species of wild-type and/or sterile fly, and the wild-type fly – with a particular reproductive status (i.e. gravid female before she lays) would enhance the surveillance and/or catch and kill mechanism of traps. If this can be done over a wider (amplified signal) geographic area, thus reducing the number of traps, it would be a step forward. This efficiency would also reduce both monetary and human costs of responses.

Examples of projects on this topic could include:

- Determining the geographic range/distance of attractant detection by the fly based on habitats or other factors impacting the effectiveness of attractants and lures.
- Developing the use of pheromones in attractants and lures.
- Optimizing and increasing the specificity of attractants, such as creating sex-specific attractants focused on gravid females.
- Developing combination trap and kill platforms.
- Researching and developing attractant and lure improvements, such as researching signals emitted by microbes in open wounds for inclusion in traps and lures.

Topic 3: Develop and increase understanding of NWS therapeutics/treatments (i.e. products that could treat, prevent, or control NWS) for animals and that could be stockpiled and used in animals should NWS reach the United States.

This priority topic aims to address the welfare of infested mammalian hosts while also interrupting the life cycle of the fly before the larvae fall off to complete maturation in the environment. There are animal withdrawal considerations as well as environmental safety considerations with injectables, per os (oral), swim dip vats and pour-ons (not to mention impregnated ear tags and other such devices) that must be taken into consideration. Additionally, some species have no well-researched data on such treatments nor approved treatments. This is a key area at the vector/pest-host interface that requires discovery and advancement.

Examples of projects on this topic could include:

- Researching pharmacokinetics/pharmacodynamics of existing animal products related to effectiveness, human food safety (e.g., tissue concentration profiles in wounds that larvae infest), and the relationship between the effectiveness of the drug against NWS and concentrations in plasma, wounds, and/or larvae.
- Developing active ingredients and products to prevent, control, or treat NWS in livestock that, if successful, could be used in certified organic livestock systems and be approved/authorized by EPA, as appropriate, for use in the United States.
- Developing active ingredients and products to prevent, control, or treat NWS in livestock or wildlife, or provide novel or improved administration methods, that if successful, could be approved/authorized by FDA/CVM or EPA, as appropriate, for use in the United States.

Topic 4: Develop other tools to bolster preparedness or response to NWS.

This priority topic addresses the gaps from those preceding and progresses them to practical translation in field applications for surveillance, luring/trapping, vaccines/repellants, and addresses wildlife species, which could also be implemented in animals in zoological collections (exotics). The academic translation to real world preparedness and response is a necessary and logical progression in this R&D effort.

Examples of projects on this topic could include:

- Developing durable modifications to allow for discrimination between wild and sterilized flies.
- Improving SIT dispersal methodology.
- Developing a vaccination platform. If successful, could be licensed by USDA's Center for Veterinary Biologics for use in the United States.
- Innovating husbandry practices to limit wounding.
- Developing novel NWS repellants that could be deployed in livestock and wildlife environments.
- Addressing decontamination and carcass disposal, including in wildlife.
- Enhancing detection tools and increasing inspection capabilities for use in a production setting or in wildlife.
- Using imagery tools for surveillance of animal movements (e.g. the use of drone/satellite technologies, AI-assisted trail cameras, etc.).
- Developing ecological tools used to guide the monitoring and release of sterilized flies in the environment.
- Creating models for how ecological and behavioral factors in wildlife impact the spread of NWS.

APPENDIX 2. NEW APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain the following registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an NWS Grand Challenge award. **These registrations must all be completed prior to the application being submitted.**

Failure to complete registrations in advance of a due date is not a valid reason for a late submission. Take these steps before submitting your application in [ezFedGrants](#). This information is also available on APHIS' [How to Apply for APHIS Funding: Getting Started](#) web page.

1. **Register your organization with the U.S. Government System for Award Management (SAM).**
You must be registered with SAM to apply for Federal funding, including all APHIS opportunities.
 - a. You can register in SAM at any time, even if you're not applying for funding right away.
 - b. See job aid attachments to Funding Opportunity. When registering in SAM.GOV pay attention to the Reqs and Certs (Financial Assistance) section.
2. **Create a Login.gov account.** This gives you secure access to USDA's online systems and services, including ezFedGrants.
 - a. *Note: The use of Login.gov is optional for existing [USDA eAuthentication](#) account holders. For more information, visit [Login.gov for Existing USDA Customers](#).*
 - b. Non-domestic applicants that cannot validate identification, please review Section 5, Submission and Deadlines.
3. **Establish an ezFedGrants Account.** Applicants must have an active account in the USDA ezFedGrants system to submit their application for the NWS Grand Challenge Funding. You'll need to have at least one Grants Administrative Officer and one Signatory Official to set up your account. We recommend identifying these individuals as soon as possible and prior to submitting proposals to streamline your application process. For help accessing and using the [ezFedGrants](#) system, contact the ezFedGrants help desk at ezFedGrants@cfo.usda.gov
4. **Job aid for requesting role assignments in ezFedGrants:** [Role Assignment Job Aid](#)
5. **Webpage with links to job aids for using ezFedGrants can be found here:** [ezFedGrants FAQ and General Information Job Aids](#)