

## Questions Asked During the Webinar

**Purpose of the PAR:** *develop comparative approaches* (genome structure and function; the relationship between genomic features and phenotypes); *enable the use of a diverse array of species* (advance our ability to understand basic biological processes related to human health and disease); and *develop novel analytical tools and resources*

### **Q1. Has NIFA committed to funding two grants in each receipt cycle or two grants in total?**

**A1.** NIFA has set aside \$3M to fund two grants in 2019. They may decide to sign on again to the PAR in 2020 and then will fund more applications through this mechanism.

### **Q2. What is the scored NIH R01 review criteria?**

**A2.** We review R01s based on: significance, investigator(s), innovation, approach, and environment. More information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/pa-16-160.html>

### **Q3. Has this program funded work on invertebrates?**

**A3.** We have not funded any applications yet, as the first awards will be made later in September 2018. Work involving invertebrates will likely be lower program priority, but it is possible to successfully make the case that invertebrates are necessary for your research.

### **Q4. Will these applications be reviewed together in the same study section, or will they go to separate reviews?**

**A4.** Most of the applications will go to Genetic Variation and Evolution (GVE) study section, but we expect some applications to go to Genomics, Computational Biology, and Technology (GCAT) and other study sections. Regardless of where these applications end up, each will be reviewed on its own merits by reviewers with the appropriate scientific expertise. It does not matter where the review takes place or if it is reviewed in conjunction with other PAR-17-482 applications.

### **Q5. For proposals that include agricultural and non-agricultural species, is there a tipping point at which it will be considered by NIH or USDA?**

**A5.** NIFA is specifically looking to fund applications with relevance to agriculture. Funding is highly dependent on each institute's interests and priorities, and if applicants are not sure if their proposal will be of interest, then they are encouraged to email [Dr. Troyer](#) and [Dr. Matukumalli](#). In some cases, we may actually recommend applying directly to USDA or NIH if your work is more specific.

### **Q6. Will proposals that are targeted at NIH have an advantage if they also address the relevance to agricultural animals?**

**A6.** We are looking for projects that are broadly applicable. In the "significance" section of your grant proposal, you should explain how the tools/methods you will develop will be useful for biomedical, agricultural, and/or conservation communities.

**Q6. You mentioned that proposals should use existing data as much as possible. Will purely computational and/or data validation proposals be more likely to be funded compared to experiments that generate new data?**

**A6.** We are not favoring one kind of grant proposal, but do like to see research that takes advantage of existing datasets. It is also harder to make the case to fund very expensive, data generating proposals when the agency does not have a lot of money to grant. However, we acknowledge that some experiments require new data and urge applicants to consider how they can do that in a practical and cost-effective manner.

**Q8. Will grants be funded at lower levels than the proposed budget? What are the ballpark funding levels?**

**A8.** It is untrue that “cheaper” applications are always better than ones with higher budgets. The funding level that NIH/USDA are happy with depends on what other grants have come in and what our budget is in a given year (including capacity to grant new awards). We often do cut budgets for various reasons, but we are allowing \$500K direct costs and expect that the applications will be pushing that number as genomics is an expensive field. The first bar in review is the quality of science, and if the science scores well, then we will look at the budget. We will always talk to potential grantees before cutting a budget to determine what impact a cut would have on the science.

**Q9. How much does the grant pay per year?**

**A9.** NIH allows \$500K direct costs per year. for NIH. NIH gives awards per year, NIFA does it differently. Please see the following for NIFA policies:

<https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA%20Policy%20Guide%20update%206-8-2018%20-%20508.pdf>.

**Q10. Would work using paleogenomic samples be in scope?**

**A10.** It could be, providing applicants explain why paleogenomic samples are necessary for their study.

**Q11. Would studies investigating AIDS be responsive?**

**A11.** Applicants should directly contact NHGRI and NIFA program staff about these studies. They could potentially be in scope if AIDs will increase our understanding of genomes.

**Q12. Are NIH R01 awards renewable?**

**A12.** Potentially, yes.

**Q13. As technology is moving so quickly, would there be any advantage to proposing a shorter grant cycle (i.e. three years) compared to a longer grant (i.e. four-five years)?**

**Q13.** We are planning to fund these applications for three years. We will consider funding for a fourth year if there is a strong justification. Regardless of how many years the grant will run, it is important to include language about how you plan to adapt to changing technology.

**Q14. Do early stage investigators get longer grant cycles?**

**A14.** Yes, early stage investigators will be considered for five years unless they request otherwise.