

## PRESS RELEASE



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### USDA NIFA – IWYP Request for Applications (RFA)

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), in coordination with the International Wheat Yield Partnership (IWYP), has just announced a Competitive Call for research grant applications that seek breakthroughs for cereal (*Triticeae* species) breeding using new technologies, and also discoveries that lead to significantly greater grain size, set and grain filling duration following embryo formation, in diverse environments, without compromising grain protein concentration. The appropriated amount available for NIFA to support this program in FY 2016 is approximately US\$3.4 million with anticipated US\$12 million continuation through 2019 provided appropriations are available for this purpose.

Through this RFA, NIFA and IWYP continue to support the G20 nations' Wheat Initiative which is committed to coordinate wheat research in the areas of genetics, genomics, physiology, breeding and agronomy internationally. One of the Wheat Initiative's key aims, increasing the genetic component of wheat yield and developing new wheat varieties adapted to different geographical regions, is being led by the International Wheat Yield Partnership and its partners.

### Program Description

NIFA, in alignment with IWYP, invites research and integrated proposals in the area of increasing the genetic yield potential of wheat, as defined by "grain yield in the absence of stress".

This RFA will focus on 2 priority areas: (1) Standard grants that target the use of new technologies to enable breakthroughs for cereal breeding and; (2) Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP) grants for breakthrough discoveries that lead to significantly greater grain size, set and grain filling duration following embryo formation, in diverse environments, without compromising grain protein concentration in *Triticeae* species. Under NIFA guidelines, project leads must be US based but international partners are encouraged.

To view the NIFA press release for this RFA follow the link: <http://1.usa.gov/1QHkwzZ>

For detailed RFA information and application information follow the links:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/nifa-international-wheat-yield-partnership-program-nifa-iwyp>

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=280421>

### Comments

Dr. Jeff Gwyn, IWYP Program Director notes: "Having NIFA join our growing list of partners via this RFA is an exciting development. The high level of scientific excellence that NIFA demands and the project management approach that it employs perfectly match those of IWYP. It is rewarding to continue to build our partnerships with such dynamic and strong partners as NIFA as we work to develop a ground breaking international wheat yield improvement program."

Dr. Richard Flavell FRS, who chairs the Science Impact and Executive Board of IWYP, says: "This linkage with USDA NIFA is particularly exciting because IWYP is a relatively new funding and coordination partnership for stimulating wheat research and development. IWYP aims to push the translation of scientific discoveries into elite wheat varieties ready for marketing to both non-industrialised and industrialised countries. IWYP is delighted to be working with NIFA given their track

record of identifying and managing high quality science projects through to outputs that address specific research targets.”

Mr. Stephen Visscher, CBE, Deputy Chief Executive – International of the BBSRC, a major funder of IWYP and plant and agricultural research in the UK, states: “The alignment of IWYP with USDA NIFA in this RFA is another important milestone in the international funding and research partnership that IWYP is based upon, and should further enable research that seeks to achieve our goal of increasing the genetic yield potential of wheat by up to 50% in the next two decades. The RFA and alignment with NIFA is a natural fit to IWYP and will allow them to further build on their previous investments in cereal research. We continue to believe that IWYP is but one important new strategy to address the issue of global food security in the future as well as provide a model of how coordinated international research programs can be done effectively and efficiently”.

## Ends

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## About IWYP

Globally, wheat is the most important staple crop, providing 20% of daily calories and protein. Due to population growth and changing diets, wheat demand is expected to increase by 60% by 2050. To meet this demand, annual wheat yield increases must grow from the current level of below 1% to at least 1.7%. These urgent global needs have provided the motivation for the formation of IWYP by major agricultural research funding organizations in many countries with the goal of raising the genetic yield potential of wheat by up to 50% over the coming 20 years.

IWYP is an independent research activity which also responds to a major priority of the G20 sponsored Wheat Initiative. It will help the Wheat Initiative to fulfil its mission to “coordinate wheat research and contribute to global food security. All partners are committed to transparency, collaboration, open communication of results, data sharing as well as improved coordination to maximize global impact and eliminate duplication of effort.

IWYP represents a long-term global endeavour that utilizes a collaborative approach to bring together funding from public and private research organisations from a large number of countries. Currently, this includes the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council of the United Kingdom (BBSRC), Grains Research and Development Corporation of Australia (GRDC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Biotechnology of India (DBT), International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, in Spanish, Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo (CIMMYT), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique of France (INRA), Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) and Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico (SAGARPA). Over the first five years, the growing list of partners aims to invest up to US\$100 million.

Further details can be found at <http://iwyp.org>.

## References

<http://www.wheatinitiative.org/news-media/wheat-initiative/wheat-initiative-strategic-research-agenda>  
<http://ccafs.cgiar.org/bigfacts/#theme=food-security>  
<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/publications/topic/future-bread.aspx>