Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

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USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA **NRCS**
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Funding Opportunity

The fiscal year 2013 Announcement for Program Funding (APF) for CIG was published on February 22, 2013.

The APF is available at:

- ✓ www.grants.gov, and
- ✓ http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html

Authority

CIG was authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) under:

✓ Food Security Act of 1985,

✓ Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, and

✓ Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Description

CIG is a *voluntary* <u>*competitive*</u> *program:*

✓ to stimulate the *development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies*

✓ to leverage Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production.

Program Purpose

✓ The purpose is to demonstrate potentially innovative technology and/or approaches.

✓ CIG does not fund research.
- ❑ Not for Bench or Basic phases
- ❑ Maybe for Application phase
- ❑ Okay for Commercialization phase

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Eligibility Information

Applicant Eligibility

Under CIG, EQIP funds are used to award <u>competitive grants </u>to:

- ✓ non-federal governmental

- ✓ non-governmental organizations

- ✓ federally-recognized Indian tribes

- ✓ individuals

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Eligibility Information

- State governments
- County governments
- City or township governments
- Special district governments
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)

- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- Individuals
- For profit organizations other than small businesses
- Small businesses

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Eligibility Information

Applications are accepted from:

✓ all 50 States,

✓ the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and

✓ the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

Eligibility Information

Project Eligibility

✓ To be eligible for CIG, <u>projects must involve </u>landowners who meet the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) eligibility requirements.

✓ Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

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To participate in <u>EQIP financial assistance</u>, an individual/farmer or agricultural entity must meet the eligibility requirements in 7 C.F.R. 1466.8, which include the following:

Criteria	Potential Verification Documentation*
Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (7 C.F.R. Part 12)	Documentation of their compliance status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal
Have an interest in the agricultural operation as defined in 7 C.F.R. Part 1400	Documentation of their farm interest can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal showing that the producer has farm records established
Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract period	Documentation can be provided in the form of a deed, lease, or other documents which show the producer has adequate control for the term of the proposed contract period
The average adjusted gross income of the individual, joint operation, or legal entity may not exceed $1,000,000, unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person, joint operation, or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income (7 C.F.R. Part 1400)	If using FY 2009-2012 CIG funding, documentation of a producer's AGI eligibility status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center, or through the USDA customer service on-line portal.

*Many of the verification documents will require that the producer have current records established with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) or require that the producer establish new records.

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Eligibility Information

Matching Funds

- Applicants must provide non-Federal funding (matching funds) for at least 50 percent of the project cost (1:1 ratio).

- At least half of the funds used to meet this matching requirement must come from cash resources.

  Note: We understand these are preliminary figures at this point. If the application is approved for full submission there may be differences once the full details of the budget are developed.

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Eligibility Information

Matching Funds (Example)

Total Project Cost: $200,000

– CIG Contribution: $100,000

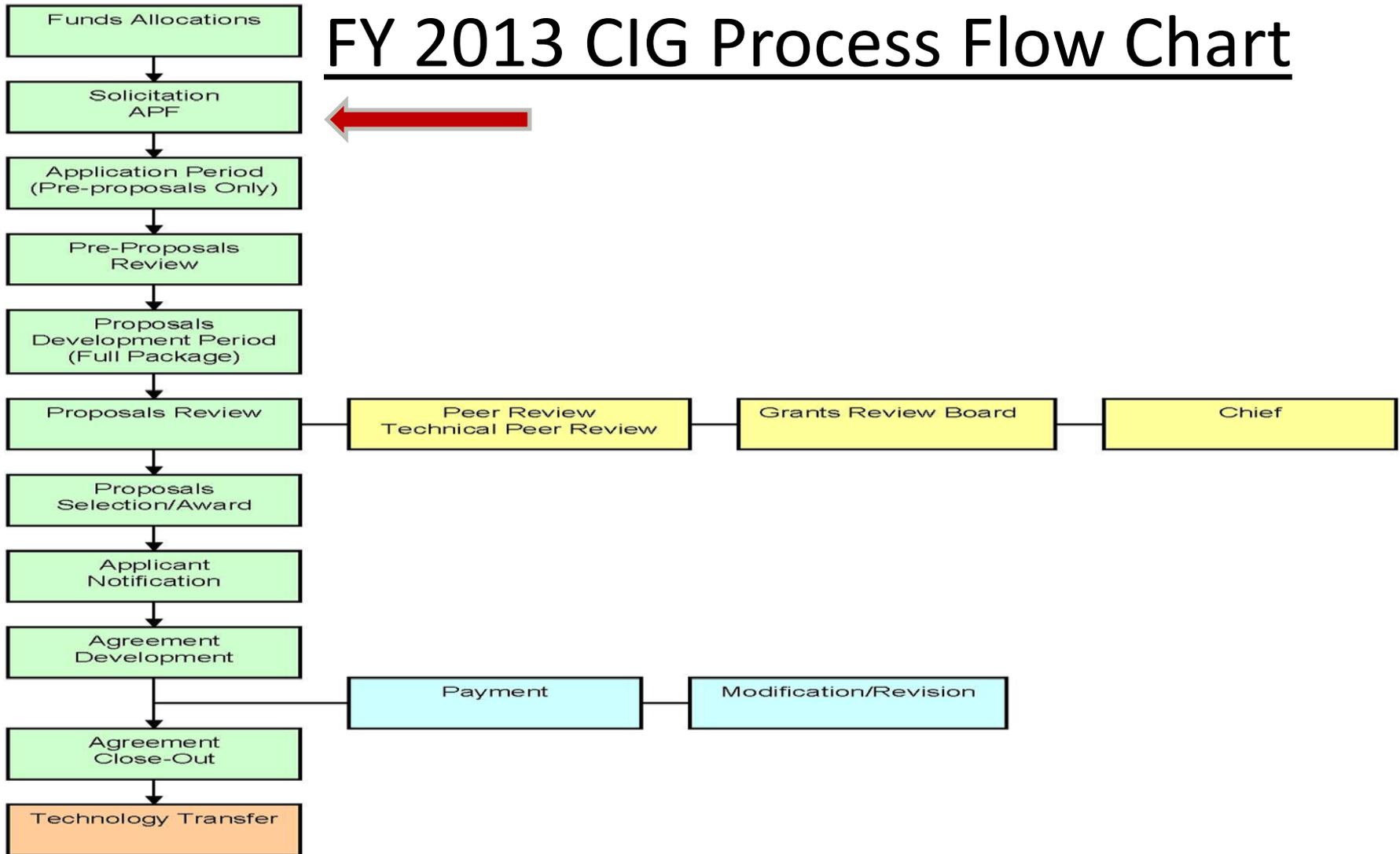– Applicant's Contribution: $100,000

✓ Cash: $50,000

✓ In-kind: $50,000

Eligibility Information

Matching Funds

An exception regarding matching funds is made for projects funded out of the set-aside. Up to three-fourths of the required matching funds for such projects (up to 37.5 percent <u>of the total project cost</u>) may derive from in-kind contributions.

Beginning or Limited Farmers or Ranchers, Indian Tribes, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities.

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Eligibility Information

Matching Funds (Example)

Total Project Cost: $200,000

- CIG Contribution: $100,000

- Applicant's Contribution: $100,000

✓ Cash: $25,000

✓ In-kind: $75,000

National Component

In fiscal year 2013, NRCS is making available $25 million to support CIG.

In addition, the maximum award amount for any project will not exceed $1 million. CIG will fund single- and multi-year projects, not to exceed three years.

FY 2013 CIG Process Flow Chart

Deadlines

✓ Pre-Proposal Deadline

- March 22, 2013

✓ Pre-proposal Determination Deadline

- April 15, 2013

Pre-Proposal Items

1) **Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance)

   Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application.

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:	* 2. Type of Application:	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):
☐ Preapplication	☒ New	
☒ Application	☐ Continuation	* Other (Specify):
☐ Changed/Corrected Application	☐ Revision	

* 3. Date Received:	4. Applicant Identifier:
Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.	

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:	* 5b. Federal Award Identifier:

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:	7. State Application Identifier:

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):	* c. Organizational DUNS:

d. Address:

* Street1:

Street2:

* City:

County/Parish:

* State:

Province:

* Country: USA: UNITED STATES

* Zip / Postal Code:

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:	Division Name:

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Suffix:

Title:

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

10.912

CFDA Title:

* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

USDA-NRCS-NHQ-13-03

* Title:

Conservation Innovation Grants

13. Competition Identification Number:

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

[Add Attachment] [Delete Attachment] [View Attachment]

* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

[Add Attachments] [Delete Attachments] [View Attachments]

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant [ ]   * b. Program/Project [ ]

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

[ ] | Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date: Sept 1, 2012   * b. End Date: [ ]

18. Estimated Funding ($):

* a. Federal [ ]

* b. Applicant [ ]

* c. State [ ]

* d. Local [ ]

* e. Other [ ]

* f. Program Income [ ]

* g. TOTAL [ ]

* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?

[ ] a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on [ ] .

[ ] b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

[X] c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

[ ] | Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

[ ] **** I AGREE**

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: [ ]   * First Name: [ ]

Middle Name: [ ]

* Last Name: [ ]

Suffix: [ ]

* Title: [ ]

* Telephone Number: [ ]   Fax Number: [ ]

* Email: [ ]

* Signature of Authorized Representative: Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.   * Date Signed: Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.

Pre-Proposal Items

2) **Project Summary:** (Two to three pages, with a three-(3) page maximum) Applicants must submit a description including the information below.
   - a) Project title;
   - b) <u>Primary area for consideration (refer to page 3);</u>
   - c) Project duration (anticipated project start date of September 1, 2013, not to exceed three years);
   - d) Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail);
   - e) Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
   - f) Project purpose;
   - g) Project area/location;
   - h) Project summary;
   - i) Project deliverables/products; and
   - j) <u>Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement</u>. Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project. Projects that do not involve EQIP eligible producers are ineligible for a CIG award.

Pre-Proposal Items

3) **Budget Information:** (Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs).

    a) Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share. If your cost share is from multiple sources you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. Applicants must prepare this document to identify budget needs.

    b) A one page narrative describing the budget needs and justifying why the budget is appropriate should also be included. This is limited to a one-page maximum.

SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY				Total
	(1) NRCS-CIG	(2) Applicant	(3)	(4)	(5)
a. Personnel	$	$	$	$	$
b. Fringe Benefits					
c. Travel					
d. Equipment					
e. Supplies					
f. Contractual					
g. Construction					
h. Other					
i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)					$
j. Indirect Charges					$
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)	$	$	$	$	$
7. Program Income	$	$	$	$	$

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How to Submit

- Electronically
  - ✓ www.grants.gov
  - ✓ nrcscig@wdc.usda.gov*

- Hardcopy
  - ✓ Hand-deliver
  - ✓ Mail

*Preferred method

Key Points

See NRCS as your customer

➤ Innovative Technology or Approach

➤ Transferability

➤ Benefits to NRCS and Agricultural Producers

Application Summary

- Review APF
- Complete and sign form SF-424.
- Determine applicant eligibility: Federally recognized Indian Tribe, State, or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or individual.
- Determine project location eligibility: 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).
- Describe the involvement of landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements in the project.

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Application Summary

- Establish connection between the project and the APF topical areas.
- Establish project length (1-3 years, starting on Sept 1, 2013)
- Complete project budget information (SF-424A) as required in the APF pre-proposal section.
- Establish federal funds request (up to $1 million). There is a 50% matching funds requirement.
- Submit application by deadline.

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Highlights

- For Applicants
- For Grantees
- Final Reports
- Greenhouse Gas Efforts

Conservation Innovation Grants

NRCS provides funding opportunities for agriculturalists and others through various programs. Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies while leveraging Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production. Under CIG, Environmental Quality Incentives Program funds are used to award competitive grants to non-Federal governmental or nongovernmental organizations, Tribes, or individuals.

CIG enables NRCS to work with other public and private entities to accelerate technology transfer and adoption of promising technologies and approaches to address some of the Nation's most pressing natural resource concerns. CIG will benefit agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement and compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations. NRCS administers CIG.

Funding Opportunity

NRCS is offering a funding opportunity to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging the Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production. The application period is open until March 22, 2013.

The document below requires Adobe Acrobat Reader:

FY 2013 CIG Announcement for Program Funding (PDF, 273 KB)

A webinar for potential applicants will be hosted on Wednesday, March 6th at 2:00 p.m. (EST).

https://www.connectmeeting.att.com

Meeting Number - 8888582144

Access Code: 3915676

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For Applicants

Sample Documents

The sample documents provided below are to assist applicants in developing the project description and budget presentation for the CIG application. These samples are provided as guides, they are not required formats; they simply show how budget information can be presented. Please carefully read the first page of each document for further details about budget format.

Project Description

The documents below require Adobe Acrobat Reader.

> CIG Project Description Sample A (PDF, 275 KB)
> CIG Project Description Sample B (PDF, 869 KB)

Budget

The document below requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

> CIG Budget Sample A (PDF, 293 KB)
> CIG Budget Sample B (PDF, 206 KB)
> CIG Budget Sample C (PDF, 679 KB)

January 24, 2012 Webinar Recording and Presentation

> FY 2012 CIG APF January 24, 2012 Webinar (MWV, 10 MB)
> FY 2012 CIG APF Presentation (PPTX, 358 KB)

The document below requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

> FY 2012 CIG Water Quality Questions and Answers (PDF, 127 KB)

Contact Information

Program Contacts:

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    Sheila Leonard, Grants & Agreement Specialist

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    E-mail: sheila.leonard@wdc.usda.gov

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Program Summary

- Program is administered by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- CIG was authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- A competitive grant program

- The purpose is to demonstrate potentially innovative technology and/or approaches

- Does not fund research

- Eligible applicants: non-governmental organizations, federally-recognized Indian tribes, non-federal governmental and individuals

- Eligible locations: all 50 States, the Caribbean Area, and the Pacific Islands Area

Program Summary

- To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements

- Applicants must provide non-Federal funding (matching funds) for at least 50 percent of the project cost (1:1 ratio)

- CIG funds are awarded through a nationwide grants competition for single- or multi-year projects, not to exceed three years.

- Funding notices announcing the availability of funds are published annually on the NRCS website http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ and on the Federal government's eGrants portal, www.grants.gov.

- Qualified applications will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel against criteria identified in the funding notice.

- Contact information: Gregorio Cruz, National CIG Program Manager, (703) 235-8065, gregorio.cruz@wdc.usda.gov or Stacy Swartwood, Program Analyst, (703) 235-8061, stacy.swartwood@wdc.usda.gov

Questions?

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