Overview of FY 2017 Request

America's land-grant universities and related institutions provide much of the research, education, and public outreach that sustains U.S. food, fiber, and renewable fuel production while addressing many urgent and important local, regional, national, and global problems. Financial support for this world-renowned enterprise comes from both public and private sources, but the most significant funding source is the federal-state partnership managed by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)—USDA's extramural science agency—and funded by NIFA and state and local governments.

As shown in the Table, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities supports Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) funding at $700 million. We also support funding for the five capacity priorities that support research, education, and extension efforts at America's Land-grant universities and related institutions at the levels contained in the Table.

In addition to AFRI, the Smith-Lever, Hatch Act, McIntire-Stennis, Evans-Allen, and 1890s Extension programs are the foundation on which America's Land-grants meet the critical challenges of today and tomorrow. This predictable source of funding is vital to deliver extension education and sustain the basic and translational research at Land-grant institutions.

We urge Congress to continue to make overall NIFA funding a high priority and specifically request funding for the five capacity programs that support research, education, and extension efforts at America's Land-grant universities and related institutions at the levels also outlined in the Table.

* APLU opposes the elimination of the New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE), Animal Health and Disease Research—Section 1433, and Capacity Building for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture programs.

* APLU supports the proposed increases to 1890 Institution Capacity Building Grants and 1890 Facilities Grants.

Want to know more?
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Overview of FY 2017 Request

America’s land-grant universities and related institutions provide much of the research, education, and public outreach that sustains U.S. food, fiber, and renewable fuel production while addressing many urgent and important local, regional, national, and global problems. Financial support for this world-renowned enterprise comes from both public and private sources, but the most significant funding source is the federal-state partnership managed by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)—USDA’s extramural science agency—and funded by NIFA and state and local governments.

As shown in Table 1, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities supports AFRI funding at $700 million. We also support funding for the six capacity priorities that support research, education, and extension efforts at America’s Land grant universities and related institutions at the levels contained in Table 1.

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative is the flagship competitive grant program within NIFA. We have—and continue to—aggressively endorse additional funding for this program. As shown in Table 1, we request fiscal year 2017 funding for this program at $700 million. Meanwhile, the Smith-Lever, Hatch, McIntire-Stennis, Evans-Allen and 1890’s Extension programs are the foundation on which America’s Land-grants meet the critical challenges of today and tomorrow. This predictable source of funding is vital to deliver extension education and sustain the basic and translational research at land-grant institutions.

We urge Congress to continue to make overall NIFA funding a high priority and specifically request funding for the five capacity programs that support research, education, and extension efforts at America’s land-grant universities and related institutions at the levels also outlined in Table 1.

Learn more at: www.landgrantimpacts.org

Reprinted from GHI’s 2015 GAP Report®, these two charts demonstrate the profound difference that total factor productivity (TFP) has made in the developed world over the past 50 years. “Total factor productivity is the ratio of agricultural outputs (gross crop and livestock output) to inputs (land, labor, fertilizer, machinery and livestock). When TFP rises, more output can be produced from a fixed amount of inputs. TFP growth can result from increased effectiveness of inputs, more precise use of inputs, or the adoption of improved production practices.”
1. **Summer Research Scholarships for 9-month Ph.D. / Doctoral / MFA students.** Students may apply for a summer research scholarship totaling $3,999 when no other funding sources are available. Application must be made to seek this funding including the candidate’s name, degree being sought, how far along the student is in the program (i.e., year 1, year 2, etc.), name and signature of primary advisor, department head and dean from program of study, description of how funding will be used over the summer including expected deliverables. A statement must be made describing that alternative summer support is not available. Note, funding for these scholarships is limited and will be competitive. Applications must be submitted by March 31 with a decision made by April 30. It is anticipated that 30 competitive scholarships will be available for summer 2016.

2. **Raise the floor to increase minimum monthly stipends for GAs at the doctoral and MFA from $1,000/month to $1,333/month.** This would mean that a 9-month minimum GA stipend will be equal to $36,000 and a 12-month minimum GA stipend will be equal to $40,000. The plan is to start in FY 2017 so that the money can be invested quickly.

3. **Bridge funding for Ph.D. / Doctoral / MFA students in their final year of study (i.e., dissertation year) in the event that funding has run out.** Application must be made to seek this funding including the candidate’s name, degree being sought, start date, expected end date (to be within one year from request of bridge funding), name and signature of primary advisor, department head and dean from program of study, description of how funding was provided previously and why additional funding is not available. A statement must be made describing that adequate progress has been made with an expectation of completion on end date. List monthly stipend, number of semesters of additional funding being requested (not to exceed three), and remaining credits needed toward degree.
Applications must be submitted by March 31 with a decision made by April 30. It is anticipated that 5 competitive scholarships will be available on an annual basis.

4. Encourage more aggressive recruiting with a 2-for-1 backstop program. In the case where one position is available, an offer may be extended to two students (primary – to be supported by the unit and alternate – to be supported from the 2-1 backstop program) to increase the chances that at least one student will accept. In the event that both accept, bridge funding would be available for the alternate student for one year with the expectation that this student would be picked up in subsequent years by the unit. Application must be made to seek this funding including both the primary and secondary candidates’ name(s), position number(s), degree being sought, start date, name and signature of department head and dean from program of study, and a description of the source of funding in year 2 and beyond. Evidence must be provided that sources are not available in year 1 to support the alternate candidate. List monthly stipend and expected number of credits that will be taken during the first year. Funding will only be provided from the 2-for-1 backstop in the case where the alternate student enrolls. A limited number of students can be supported with the backstop program (10), and requests will be honored on a first come first awarded basis.

5. Support for new interdisciplinary programs (example, 3 GA lines will be added to the Data Analytics initiative) and in targeted areas such as for Chemistry (2 GA lines have been added).
Bumpers College of AFLS
Honors Creative Project Guidelines

An undergraduate creative project thesis is a traditional mechanism to provide a capstone experience for undergraduates pursuing honors. In many instances, the creative project thesis represents the culmination of acquired knowledge in one's degree program. The honors creative project is to be conducted by the student under the guidance of a faculty mentor.

In cooperation with a faculty mentor, the student will design, execute, analyze, critique and report on a project that is relevant to their respective major or area of interest. Although creative projects may differ substantially across disciplines, they typically involve a literature review, project development plan, design process, analysis of the project, and recommendations as part of the thesis. Students are required to develop a thesis proposal, and encouraged to do this by taking advantage of the college-wide course on proposal development (AFLS 3413H).

Creative Project
At a minimum, a creative project will involve:

- Problem statement developed from a literature review.
- Project development plan.
- Creative development as outlined in a design process. The quality of your creative project should be a representation of the cumulative knowledge and skill acquired through your degree program.
- Proof of concept through documented outcomes.
- A lasting outcome as outlined in the design process and recommendations to others.
- Employ skills industry professionals would deem necessary.

Creative Thesis Document
The thesis represents a scholarly report on the inspiration, process, and outcomes of the creative project constructed by the student. The thesis document should include the design procedures and methodology the student used in carrying out the project. In addition, the student will describe the fabrication or materials used for the project's production. Although the specific formatting may be geared toward discipline-specific content, student theses should follow a general formatting pattern that includes the following:

- Title Page with signature lines for thesis committee
- Table of Contents
- Project Summary, Abstract, or Executive Statement
- Introduction/Literature Review
- Development Plan
- Design Process and Creative Works
- Discussion (regarding value of the project)
- Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations
- Literature Cited
- Tables, figures, sketches, photos, journals, etc.
- Appendix (as needed)

A thesis is typically 15-20 pages of text (excluding citations, figures, creative works,) using Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins.

Students are also encouraged to pursue funding for their research/creative projects through Bumpers College Undergraduate Research and Creative Project Grants or other campus-wide funding programs found at (http://honorscollege.uark.edu/current-students/research-grants/index.php).
Bumpers College of AFLS
Honors Research Project Guideline

An undergraduate research project is a traditional mechanism to provide a capstone experience for undergraduates pursuing honors. In many instances, the research project is an opportunity to showcase the knowledge and skills one has acquired in their respective degree program.

In cooperation with a faculty mentor, the student will design, research, execute, analyze, critique and report on a project that is relevant to their respective major or research interests. Although research projects may differ substantially across disciplines, they typically involve a literature review, hypothesis development, research, data collection, data analysis, and thesis preparation. Students are required to develop a thesis proposal, and are encouraged to do this by taking advantage of the college-wide course on proposal development (AFLS 3413H).

Research Project
At a minimum, the research project will involve:
- Problem statement developed from a literature review
- Hypothesis statement(s) or research objectives
- Data Collection
  - Generation of data from laboratory or field experiments (see requirements on ethical treatment of animals if applicable)
  - Generation of 'new' data based on surveys or other data collection techniques (see requirements by Internal Review Board)
  - Gathering of existing data from scientific literature
- Data Analysis
- Thesis Preparation

Thesis Document
The thesis represents a scholarly report on the research conducted by an honors student. Although the specific formatting may be geared toward discipline-specific content, student theses should follow a general formatting pattern that includes the following:
- Title Page with signature lines for thesis committee
- Table of Contents
- Project Summary, Abstract, or Executive Statement
- Introduction/Literature Review
- Materials and Methods
- Findings/Results
- Discussion/Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations
- Literature Cited
- Tables, Figures, Charts, Graphs, Sketches
- Appendix (as needed)

A thesis is typically 12-15 pages of text (excluding citations, tables, figures) using Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins.

Students are also encouraged to pursue funding for their research/creative projects through Bumpers College Undergraduate Research and Creative Project Grants or other campus-wide funding programs found at (http://honorscollege.uark.edu/current-students/research-grants/index.php).