

ARIA Frequently Asked Questions

Updated February 18, 2021

This request was developed by the APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly Experiment Station Section (APLU BAA). It is an Experiment Station Section-led effort to secure funding for research facilities at land-grant universities and non-land grant colleges of agriculture. The APLU BAA Experiment Station Section is operating under approval from the Policy Board of Directors (PBD). The APLU works via its government affairs effort to achieve PBD objectives.

Request: "We propose that funding for improvements in agricultural research facilities be included in any upcoming the Infrastructure/Stimulus Bill. The request level is \$11.5 billion designated for infrastructure grants awarded over a five-year period. The grants program is authorized under the Research Facilities Act, Section 7503 of the 2018 Farm Bill.*

1. What funding vehicle is ESS (and APLU) aiming to have this request included in?

We are advocating to receive agricultural research infrastructure funding for the land-grant university community through an economic stimulus bill.

2. What is the expected timeline for the request?

The President is developing an infrastructure proposal that his administration will release in anticipation of an economic stimulus bill.

3. What is the ESS membership expected to do?

We are asking the ESS membership to socialize the request with influencers (e.g., Farm Bureau, coalition members, etc.) who can convince members of Congress (champions) to support the infrastructure request during congressional deliberations on the stimulus bill. We encourage you to work closely with your university administration and lobbyist. It is important to identify and cultivate congressional champions to ensure a campaign.

4. What is the amount and duration of the request?

APLU proposes an agriculture facility focused infrastructure grant program funded at \$11.5 billion awarded over a five-year period. The funding may be administered through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Agricultural research facilities, particularly LGU facilities, are optimally placed to yield geographically relevant agricultural and natural resource insights at the local, state, and regional levels.

5. How was the request number chosen?

In 2020, Gordian assessed the state of facilities at the colleges or schools of agriculture, reporting that 69% of the buildings are at the end of their useful life. Gordian reports that the cost of upgrading deferred maintenance in 2021 is \$11.5 billion, with a replacement value of \$38.1 billion. The new request level is equal to the estimate of deferred maintenance in the Gordian report.

6. Why is ESS (and APLU) using the Research Facilities Act as the basis for the request?

The Research Facilities Act (Act) is a useful request tool for our efforts. The ESS is basing the proposal on the Act, which was most recently amended and reauthorized in the 2018 Farm bill due to successful ESS advocacy efforts, with additional direction/requirements that the funding provided be available to colleges and schools of agriculture as described in the next FAQ below. The Research Facilities Act authorizes a grant program to assist in the construction, alteration acquisition, modernization, renovation, or remodeling of agricultural research facilities. After we secure champions, provisions that address matching and competitiveness will be considered. The campaign requires a team of champions to move forward.

7. What colleges and schools of agriculture would be eligible for the funding?

Grants are provided to entities eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program as defined in [Section 251 \(f\) \(1\) \(C\)](#) (pg. 36/61) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994. *All APLU BAA land-grant university institutions and non-land grant colleges of agriculture are eligible. This eligibility was defined by the amendment of the Act via the 2018 Farm Bill.*

8. Will you ask for a match waiver?

Yes, we will seek a provision allowing the Secretary waiver authority for matching funds.