Growing Agricultural Science Teachers (GAST)

1. **Who is eligible to apply?**
   Eligible applicants include universities and public community colleges that provide an articulated agricultural science teacher education course of study that at least includes:
   a. Introduction to Agricultural Education, which is an Illinois Articulation Initiative transfer credit.
   b. A one semester-hour internship or other, equivalent field experience.

2. **What are allowable expenditures for GAST funds?**
   Expenditures for identified "teacher education candidate recruitment and retention initiatives" are allowable for GAST funds. This is defined further in the rules as:

   a. Identification of students (grades 11 and 12) interested in agricultural education as a career.
   b. Activities and strategies to attract students to agricultural education as a career, including, **but not limited to**, introducing agricultural education as a career; providing students mentors or other forms of personal support; and providing scholarships, stipends, or other forms of financial or in-kind support.

   An institution that elects to offer professional learning for new teachers will first seek ISBE approval as a provider of professional development for teachers in this field. No more than 5% of the grant funds may be spent on professional learning for the staff of the applicant's agricultural education teacher preparation program. GAST funds cannot duplicate or supplant efforts already conducted by the college.

3. **How will my GAST plan be reviewed?**
   The quality and cost-effectiveness of your plan will be reviewed. Recruitment and retention strategies will be measured against their ability to promote awareness of agricultural education as a career, to create enhanced incentives for students to enter and persist in an agricultural teacher preparation program, and to help eliminate barriers that may otherwise prevent individuals from completing preparation programs. Planned use of experienced teachers and/or industry professionals must expand preservice teachers' understanding of agricultural education as a profession and/or different facets of the agricultural industry. Plans for professional learning of early career teachers must be based on the expressed needs of said individuals or their place of employment. Professional learning for a college's agricultural education staff must be directly related to the expressed needs of preservice and early career teachers.

   Experienced (master) teacher means a teacher with no fewer than six years of teaching experience and not more than 10 years out of teaching (retired or otherwise) at the time of the application.

   Industry professional (practitioner) means an individual who currently or previously engaged (not more than 10 years prior to time of application) in an agricultural occupation or someone who holds an Educator License with Stipulations in AFNR or related-skill area and has taught within the previous 10 years at the time of the GAST application.

4. **How do I submit my ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) Budget Application for GAST?**
   Follow the steps below to complete you initial IWAS Budget Application for GAST.
   1. Log in to IWAS portal.

2. Select the Agricultural Education — GAST Program.
3. Create a new project for the respective fiscal year.
4. Complete the Applicant Information page. "End Date" must be June 30. Click "Save Page."
5. On Amendments page, select "Original Application" and click "Save Page."
6. Complete Work Plan pages by answering the respective narrative questions on each:
   a. Work Plan Narrative (Complete narratives. Click "Save Page.")
   b. Goals and Objectives (Add up to 15 goals, activities, and plans. Click "Save Page.")
   c. Work Plan Uploads (Upload necessary documents. Click "Save Page.")
7. Complete Budget pages by inputting the required information on each:
   a. Indirect Cost Calculation (Select "Colleges and universities." Click "Save Page.")
   b. Budget Detail (Input respective expenditures with correct codes. Click "Save Page.")
   c. Budget (Read and review for accuracy. Revise Budget Details, if needed.)
   d. Payment Schedule (Input payments. Click "Calculate Total." Click "Save Page.")
8. Complete Programmatic Risk Assessment by selecting appropriate responses.
9. Complete GATA pages. Check verification box on each page and click "Save Page."
10. Complete Assurances pages. Check verification box on each page and click "Save Page."
11. On Submit page, click and run the "Consistency Check." Make any identified corrections.
12. Lock Application and Submit to next level for approval.

5. **How do I check the status of my IWAS Budget Application?**
To check the status of your Budget Application, log in into IWAS and open the specific application you are checking. Navigate to the "Application History" tab to view a timeline of action taken on your application.

6. **How do I submit an amendment to my IWAS Budget Application?**
Follow the steps below to complete an amendment to your IWAS Budget Application for GAST.
1. Log in to IWAS portal.
2. Select the Agricultural Education—GAST Program.
3. Select the radial button corresponding to the most recent application shown.
4. Select "Create Amendment."
5. On Amendments page, select "Amended Application" and input the number of the amendment.
6. On Amendments page, complete the "Grant Changes" narrative.
7. In the narrative, include function object codes of specific changes to be implemented.
8. Navigate to Page Lock Control tab (second from left).
9. On Page Lock Control tab, ensure all pages needing to be changed are "OPEN."
10. If not open, select radial button next to corresponding pages. Then click "Save."
11. Make necessary changes on each page, as needed. Click "Save" after each page is changed.
12. Ensure GATA and Assurances pages are complete and saved.
13. On Submit page, click and run the "Consistency Check." Make any identified corrections.
14. Lock Application and Submit to next level for approval.