MULTISTATE PROJECTS – Appendix E

Background:

A Multistate activity involves cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a State Agricultural Experiment Station, working with other SAES, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), non-land-grant colleges or universities, and industry, endeavors to solve problems that concern more than one state or region. Joining an existing project is relatively straightforward and the steps involved are given below.

Initiating a new project is somewhat more complex. If you wish to initiate a new multistate project the first step is to establish a Development Committee (DC) through a sponsoring Station Director. Please contact Alva Slusher for additional information on initiation of new multi-states and forming and joining development technical or other committees.

Searching Multistate Activities:

The link below provides instructions on searching the National Information Management Support System (NIMSS) for relevant activities. This is useful to allow you to identify existing Multistate projects which you might wish to join.

To view Multistate activities:

- Go to the National Information Management Support System (NIMSS) at http://nimss.umd.edu
- Select the Search icon on the left hand side of the screen.
- Enter the appropriate information and click on the Search button. If you want to search projects based on a specific word, type that word in the Project Title text box.

Criteria for Multistate Research Projects

Multistate research projects most often begin with a broad group of stakeholders who interact with faculty and staff at the state agricultural experiment stations. Consequently, the projects address problems or issues directly confronting stakeholders that require further research for resolution. Faculty then generate a proposal that is submitted through the sponsoring agricultural experiment station director to one of the four geographical regional associations of agricultural experiment station directors. The project is then subjected to the policies and procedures governing the Multistate Research Fund program. Multistate research policies and procedures are contained in the National Multistate Guidelines. Each
A multistate project is required to meet the following criteria: 

A Multistate activity involves cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a SAES, working with other SAES, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), or a college or university, cooperates to solve problems that concern more than one state and usually more than one region. In addition, the following must be demonstrated in the project proposal:

1. The objectives are clearly focused.
2. Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of the stated objectives.
3. The project is multistate and multidisciplinary.
4. The project proposal has been peer-reviewed.
5. The proposed project is oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on priorities developed from stakeholder input.
6. The project is responsive to NIFA goals.

***If you wish to initiate a new Multistate project contact Alva Slusher and indicate that you need to discuss project initiation and necessary procedures with either the Director or Associate Director. The process is lengthy; it will likely take a minimum of three years to bring a new project to fruition.

Although it is preferred that all participants be involved prior to the writing stage of new projects, it will occasionally be necessary to add a participant to an active project (USDA Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities).

Joining an approved multistate activity:
You need to complete an Appendix E to participate in multistate activities. To complete an Appendix E:

Go to the National Information Management Support System (NIMSS) at http://nimss.umd.edu/

Select the Member Login & Registration on the left hand side of the screen. You must log in to complete this process. If you have previously participated in a Multistate project as Virginia's representative, you are registered. Enter your id and password. If you haven’t participated in a project, you will need to register. If you haven't previously registered, you will need to do so to continue the process. (Make sure you use the same login as you used with your original login to NIMSS.)

Drag your mouse over the Participants section at the top of the screen. When the pop-up menu appears, select the Draft/Edit Participant Info option.

Click on the Draft New link.

Enter the information for your participation on this specific multistate activity.
Project Number:
Select the Project Region from the first dropdown. When joining a new, revised, or replacement project, the number will be a TEMP (e.g., S_TEMP 1234. Do not enter an Appendix E to join the existing project which will be terminating.

Select the Project Number from the second dropdown.
The project title will appear after your selection from the project number dropdown.

Station:
Select Category
AES - Ag Experiment Station is pre-selected
Region - S is pre-selected
Virginia – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VA Tech) is pre-selected

Name: (last, first) – Your name should appear here.
If your name doesn’t appear in the dropdown list you will have to click on the Register This Person button and enter your information.

If you will be the official station representative for this project you will need to click on the box shown before the list of Objectives. If you are the only individual from Virginia Tech on this multistate you should register as the official station representative. If there is already a Virginia Tech faculty member on this multistate it is likely that they are already the official representative. There can be only ONE official representative per station.

Objectives:
You must choose at least 1 objective from those listed.

Research Commitments: This area is to be completed if you are putting a percentage of your research time on this project. You must put at least 10% time on this project (in decimal format 0.10). If you do not have a current Hatch project, your percentage time on the multistate should be equal to your percentage research appointment. If you feel that would be inappropriate for any reason please contact Alva Slusher. Please note-the definitions for Scientific Year (SY), Professional Year (PY) and Technical Year (TY):

Scientist Years (SY): A scientist is a research worker responsible for original thought, judgments, and accomplishments in independent scientific study. Generally, the individual holds an academic rank of assistant professor or above and is capable of holding principal investigator status at the reporting institution.
- **Professional Years (PY):** Professionals usually hold one or more college degrees, and have otherwise qualified for employment in a professional category. Generally, professionals have a high degree of research-activity responsibility but do not hold principle investigator status at the reporting institution. Typically these are graduate students and research associates.

- **Technical Years (TY):** Technical Support staff are associated with research efforts in a technical capacity and do not participate in the investigative aspects of the research.

**Research:** To view the Knowledge Area (KA), Subject Investigation (SOI) and Field of Science (FOS) click on the titles to access the codes.

If you have entered Research time you will need to enter at least one KA, SOI and FOS in this area.

If you are entering more than one in each area click the **Add More Rows** button.

Extension: This area is to be completed if you are putting a percentage of your extension time on this project. FTE – This area is for the percentage you will be putting on this project.

To view the Knowledge Area (KA) click on the title to access the codes.

If you have entered Extension time you will need to enter at least one KA in this area. If you are entering more than one in each area click the **Add More Rows** button.

When you have finished, click the **Submit** button.

The information you have entered will be submitted and our office we will receive an email indicating that our review and approval is needed. If you have any questions during this process, please contact Jody Jellison (jody@vt.edu).

Ask you department head and/or AREC Director, to send a note to VAES (jody@vt.edu) indicating approval of your participation for our records.

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**Information for new faculty:** If you have participated in a Multistate project as a representative of the university where you were previously employed, you are already registered in NIMSS. If you wish to continue on the project as a representative from Virginia Tech, you will need to edit your user profile in NIMSS to change your location from your previous place of employment to Virginia Tech. If you cannot change it, ask the Multistate Research contact in the Director’s office at your previous university to change it for you. We cannot make changes for faculty registered at other universities. Your profile must be changed before you can enter an Appendix E to join the project. If Virginia Tech already has a representative on the project, you will be a co-investigator rather than the official station representative. We suggest that you contact the official station representative and let him/her know that you plan to join because collaboration will be required to
complete the annual and final project reports. When requested to do so by your previous AES Director, you will be required to enter a final report (AD-421) to terminate your participation as that station’s participant.

**Some common errors faculty make when entering an Appendix E:**

1. Failing to mark the “Is this person the official Station representative” box. Marking the above box when someone else has already been approved as the official Station representative.

2. Improper time commitments; e.g., too much or too little time.
3. Faculty have committed all their research time, and some have committed 100% when their research time is less than 100%.

4. Total SY, TY, and PY commitment cannot be less than 10%.

5. Failing to mark the objectives or enter the CRIS codes.

6. Entering Extension FTE but not entering Extension KA or Program. Often the FTE was entered in error.

**MULTI-STATE TRAVEL**

**Criteria**

This policy applies to all faculty members who are involved in a Multistate research project with clearly defined objective(s) and contributions to the project. It does not apply to Development Committees (DC), Coordinating Committees (ACC), Education/Extension and Research Activities (ERA) or Advisory Committees (SAC).

**Travel Grants**

All faculty members who are official participants of an approved Multistate research project with clearly defined objectives for their contribution are eligible to receive up to $1,000 in travel grants to participate in those Multistate research project meetings. These travel grants will be awarded based on availability of funds. Priority will be given to those who chair a Multistate project, host a Multistate project meeting at VT, make a presentation, develop collaborations or network for external grants applications.

**Award Request**

Funding request for travel to Multistate project meetings should be submitted by E-mail to the CALS Associate Dean for Research/Director of VAES. Requests should include the following information:

- Multistate project number and title
- Amount of funds requested
- Name, location and dates of the conference/meeting, and
Brief (no more than 3-4 lines) information on the purpose of the travel, describing the role of the applicant at the meeting.
Upon approval/disapproval of the funding request, an e-mail will be sent to the applicant and copied to the applicant’s department head and CALS Budget Director’s office.

PLEASE CONTACT JODY JELLISON OR ALVA SLUSHER IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.