

# North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station Research Project Guidelines

## PURPOSE

The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station (NDAES) projects serve a variety of needs. Federal accountability requires projects from the NDAES because of receipt of formula funds from the USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for certain research activities. These projects also help define how the NDAES is meeting its missions: “to develop and disseminate technology important to the production and utilization of food, feed, fiber and fuel from crop and livestock enterprises;” and “to develop information, technology, and products that will allow North Dakotans to succeed in this new century.” Finally, the NDAES projects help individual investigators develop and accomplish their short- and long-term research goals.

## WHO SUBMITS?

Each NDAES faculty member is expected/required to have their own individual project if their AES appointment is 30% or greater. In addition to individual projects, team projects may be written if it is appropriate for the situation, or participation in a multi-state project may substitute for an individual AES project. **New faculty members in the college who have NDAES research appointments of 30% or greater should prepare and submit an AES project within one year of joining NDSU.**

Projects should encompass an individual faculty member’s program of work (e.g., grants obtained should align with project objectives). If work beyond these objectives is performed (either new grants or change of interest), a new or additional project should be developed.

## PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS and TIMELINE\*

**January 1:** New Hatch projects should be submitted to the AES Associate Director’s office on or before January 1.

Prior to January 1, the scientific merit of each new proposal will need to be evaluated at the department/unit level by two researchers and the chair/head/director. If a department/unit believes that it does not have the specialized expertise in-house to review a technical proposal, external reviewers will be permitted. If collaborators or cooperators are included on the proposal, time must be allowed for them and their immediate supervisors to review the project prior to submission of the proposal for review.

Once a proposal has been reviewed in the unit of origin, the department chair/head/director submits the proposal along with a memo indicating who reviewed the project. The project will then be sent by the NDAES to at least two reviewers on the Project Review Committee (reviewers have approximately one month to return reviews). Investigators will subsequently be notified by NDAES of the review outcome and of any necessary revisions.

**May 1:** All revisions and REEport (formerly CRIS) information will need to be completed by May 1.

**\*For new faculty, please contact Ona Vig ([ona.vig@ndsu.edu](mailto:ona.vig@ndsu.edu)) if date of appointment does not align with this timeline.**

## **NDAES REVIEW OF PROJECT**

1. *One electronic copy* of the project (developed using the preparation guidelines that follow) and department chair/head/director memo will be submitted to the Associate Director's office (sent to [ona.vig@ndsu.edu](mailto:ona.vig@ndsu.edu) and [rod.lym@ndsu.edu](mailto:rod.lym@ndsu.edu) ).
2. Associate Director's office will ensure that the project conforms to the guidelines. If project conforms to guidelines, the project will then be given to the Project Review Committee (PRC) for evaluation by at least two reviewers who are assigned by a lead reviewer; if not, the project will be sent back to investigator for corrections. The lead reviewer will make a determination on approval based on input from the PRC. The PRC is represented by each unit within the NDAES, plus at least one representative from both Extension and the Research Extension Centers (REC).
3. Upon completion of reviews, the Associate Director will write a letter to the principal investigator (PI) indicating any changes that may need to be made. Receipt of final, revised and signed proposal from the principal investigator is expected by May 1.

## **PROJECT FORMAT**

Projects must be **double-spaced, in 12 point font, have numbered pages, and be no longer than 15 pages in length from the section "Heading" to the "Importance to the State of North Dakota" section.** Projects not following the correct format will be sent back to the investigator prior to NDAES review.

## **CONTENT AND ORDER OF PROJECT FORMAT**

**Heading:** (centered at top of page)  
North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station  
North Dakota State University  
Department of \_\_\_\_\_

### **Project Number:**

Leave blank.

### **Project Title:**

Title must be concise and reflect problem areas. USDA guidelines limit all titles to 140 characters.

### **Objectives:**

Make a clear statement of objectives. Be specific and plan to limit number of objectives to a maximum of three to four. Number each objective so that it can easily be referred to in the procedure section.

### **Justification:**

Briefly state the importance of the proposed research. What problem is being addressed? Indicate the importance of the problem to agriculture; rural or urban life; and the general public of North Dakota, the

region, or the nation. What will be the anticipated economic, societal, social, or scientific outcome of the project? What are indicators of success of the project?

### **Previous Work and Present Outlook:**

Give a brief summary of the state of the science. Cover pertinent research on the problem, both previous and recent. Include your own and other relevant studies, both published and unpublished. This section should indicate 1.) questions that have not been answered by research, and 2.) how the proposed research will fill the gaps.

### **Integrated\* Research and Extension Activities:**

**Projects that include integrated Research and Extension activities are highly encouraged.** The NDAES and the NDSU Extension Service are required to spend 25% of their Hatch and Smith-Lever allocations on integrated activities. **Integrated activities are defined as jointly planned, funded, and interwoven activities between Research and Extension to solve problems. This includes the generation of knowledge and the transfer of information and technology.**

\*If a project is written as an integrated project, please insert a short paragraph in this section that explains the integrated activities. Also, please indicate in the Principal Investigator(s) Section, the scientist year (SY), professional year (PY), and technical year (TY) commitment and whether the effort is Research or Extension.

### **Procedures:**

This section is to provide a general design of the project. To begin, **re-state each of the objective statements followed by a description of the procedures/methods for that objective.** The procedure statements should show that the research needs and plans have been considered carefully and the proposed work has the potential to provide data and information which will permit accomplishing the objectives.

While the details of the experimental design do not need to be specified, provide sufficient information to indicate that an appropriate design is planned. **Where possible, cite your own or other published work instead of detailed protocols.**

Plans for Information Dissemination: Indicate how results of the research might be disseminated - providing a framework for moving your research from discovery to application. For example, identify potential target audiences (such as peers, producers, agribusinesses, or consumers) and suggest possible educational venues (such as Extension programming, field day presentations, short courses, publications, video, compact disk, or Internet presentations).

### **Literature Cited:**

Only those publications cited should be listed. Use the style of your professional journal. Citations may be single-spaced.

### **Importance to the State of North Dakota:**

Clearly delineate the value/implications of the project to the citizens of North Dakota. Specify, in nontechnical language, a statement for each Agricultural Experiment Station research project indicating 1.) the projected economic impact of each project to the State of North Dakota, and 2.) how the project relates to one of the main missions of the NDAES: “to develop information, technology, and products that will allow North Dakotans to succeed in this new century.”

**Project Duration:**

Indicate the number of years the project is expected to continue. Duration may not exceed five years. The federal reporting cycle is October 1 to September 30, so projects will have a starting date of October 1 and a termination date of September 30. Duration of up to five years is recommended but projects of shorter duration are acceptable. Scientists can envision research that is longer in duration. They should recognize that they will be required to segment their research and that they will be required to re-write at a maximum of five years. **Under new Federal guidelines, project extensions will not be allowed.**

**Principal Investigator(s):**

List principal and co-principal investigators, and associated technical support staff. Co-PIs are other NDSU faculty with a major role in the project. Lesser levels of participation are collaborators. Be sure to list first name, middle initial and last name of all personnel.

This section should also indicate an accurate percentage of time allocated to the project for each PI and support staff listed. The percentage is based on 100% of the research appointment (e.g., if the PI has a 70% research appointment and does not have another active AES research project, the effort shown can be 0.7 SY). If there are questions regarding the correct assignment of time, please contact the unit chair/head/director, Ag Budget Office director, or the Director's office prior to completing this section.

**Collaboration:**

List NDSU collaborators. Collaborators are NDSU researchers or units that are active partners but not PIs in the research project. Clearly, but briefly, specify the responsibilities of each collaborator.

**Indicate the SY, PY and/or TY time commitment for all collaborators. Each collaborator's commitment is usually 1–10% for the project but a higher percentage may be appropriate. If it is an integrated project, please specify the SY time commitment as Extension effort for Extension faculty or specialists.**

**Cooperation:**

List cooperating agencies, such as the USDA, the ND Water Commission, or the ND Department of Agriculture, if appropriate. Cooperators are non-NDSU units that are actively participating in the research or are providing a research site or space.

**If applicable, Animal Care, DNA/RNA, Radioactive Materials, or Human Subjects information will be required on separate electronic forms at time of proposal entry into federal data base.**

**Approval Page** (make this one separate page):

Space should be provided for signature and date by unit administrator for all PIs; administrators of collaborating and cooperating units; and Director, North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. Submission of a project to the Director is an indication that the lead PI has provided copies of the project to each signing administrator, made them aware of any relevant changes, and that they approve of the level of participation specified. All projects that involve work at an REC will need to be approved by the director of that center (indicated by their signature on this page). The Director will sign the final version after it has been reviewed by the PRC.

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PI's Unit Administrator's signature	Date
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Collaborating Unit(s), Administrator's signature	Date
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Cooperating Unit(s), Administrator's signature	Date
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Director, North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station	Date
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