



GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING PROPOSALS FOR THE USDA Biotechnology Risk Assessment Grants Program FY2008

Program Information: The entire Request for Applications, including eligibility requirements, definitions, review criteria, and award information is available at: www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/biotechnologyriskassessment.html.

Conflict of Interest: Please do not review this proposal if you have an institutional or consulting affiliation with the submitting institution, applicants or collaborators, or will gain some benefit from the funding of the project, financial or otherwise. Please do not review this proposal if applicants or collaborators were your thesis or postdoctoral advisee/advisor. Also, please do not review this proposal if, during the **past three years**, you have collaborated on a research project or been a co-author with the submitting applicants and collaborators.

Confidentiality: The Department of Agriculture receives research proposals in confidence and is responsible for protecting the confidentiality of their submission and contents. Thus, to maintain confidentiality **please DO NOT copy, quote, or otherwise use material from the proposal**. If you believe that a colleague can make a substantial contribution to the review, consult with us before disclosing either the contents of the proposal or the applicant's name. When you complete the review, please destroy the proposal and maintain its confidentiality. **If you are unable to review**, please contact Dr. Daniel Jones (djones@csrees.usda.gov) and destroy the proposal.

Proposal Page Limit: The Project Description section may not exceed 18 single- or double-spaced pages of written text including figures and tables. Additions to the Project Description (Appendices) are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed research and are strictly limited to a total of two reprints and/or preprints. Reviewers are advised that, should these limits be exceeded, only text within the requirements need be read.

Proposal Review Sheet: Please submit your review(s) through the CSREES Peer Review System (PRS).

Proposal Evaluation Factors

1. Scientific merit of the proposal.

- Conceptual adequacy of hypothesis;
- Clarity and delineation of objectives;
- Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of methodology;
- Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary data;
- Probability of success of project;
- Novelty, uniqueness and originality; and
- Appropriateness to regulation of biotechnology and risk assessment.

2. Qualifications of proposed project personnel and adequacy of facilities.

- Training and demonstrated awareness of previous and alternative approaches to the problem identified in the proposal, and performance record and/or potential for future accomplishments;
- Time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives;
- Institutional experience and competence in subject area; and
- Adequacy of available or obtainable support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation.

3. Relevance of project to solving biotechnology regulatory uncertainty for United States agriculture.

- Scientific contribution of research in leading to important discoveries or significant breakthroughs in announced program areas; and
- Relevance of the risk assessment research to agriculture and environmental regulations.



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Criteria for Evaluating Conference Applications

Applications that seek funding for conferences will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance and timeliness of topics and selection of appropriate speakers;
- General format of the conference, especially with regard to its appropriateness for fostering scientific exchange and/or public understanding;
- Provisions for wide participation from the scientific and regulatory community and others, as appropriate;
- Qualifications of organizing committee;
- Appropriateness of budget request; and
- Qualifications of project personnel.