AREERA State Plans of Work

T his Plan of Work (POW) newsletter focuses on the Inputs and Activities sections of the 2007 Annual Report as part of the 2009 – 2013 Plan of Work and 2007 Annual Report software, and its submission.

Inputs

Although the main focus of the Annual Report should be on outcomes and impact statements, inputs are very important to the overall report. It puts the outputs and outcomes in perspective relative to the amount of effort and resources.

The Plan of Work (POW) guidelines defines inputs as the "resources, contributions, and investments that are provided for the program. This includes Federal, state and local spending, private donations, volunteer time, etc.

The web-based software includes the estimated FTEs and the type of funds used to support the activity or planned program (i.e., Formula grants, State matching, and other funds.). AREERA requires reporting not only on the Federal agricultural research and/or extension formula funds and matching funds allocated to this planned program, but also the manner in which funds, other than formula funds, will be expended to address the critical issues being targeted by this planned program.

The Annual Report collects expenditure data for each Formula grant, State matching, and other expended funds at the Planned Program level. The cumulative amounts of these dollars are added to the Expenditure Summary page. The Expenditure Summary page contains a summary of your total expenditures from your Planned Programs for each type of funding and compares your formula fund expenditures against your total obligation for the fiscal year.

Please check your entries and then enter the amount of actual formula dollars expended in the fiscal year which comes from carryover funds from previous fiscal years. This will tell us how much of the formula funds expended came from the current fiscal year.

The Annual Report also asks for actual FTEs and SYs expended at the Planned Program level. Please enter into the input table your Professional Full-Time Equivalents (or FTEs) and Scientist Years (or SYs) expended for this Planned Program. This will help us determine level of future effort. Whole numbers are preferable; however, you may enter to the nearest tenth if necessary (it is possible some programs may only take a fraction of an FTE. Thus, we want to be flexible). CSREES will compare this figure against the overall FTE/SY figure in the Overview section to help gauge level of effort allocated to this particular program.

The FTE/SY figure reported in the Overview section includes all FTEs/SYs at the State level regardless of funding.

Activities

Activities mean either research projects or extension programs. In the logic model, activities are what a program does with its inputs, the services it provides to fulfill its mission. They include the research processes, workshops, services, conferences, community surveys, facilitation, in home counseling, etc.

In the Annual Report, enter a very brief description of the activities you completed. Just a couple of sentences, phrases, or bullets will suffice. Note that in the software, this has been pre-populated from the corresponding approved Plan of Work. You may edit it to include the actual activities if different.

How do I submit the Plan of Work to CSREES?

To submit the Plan of Work or Annual Report, all authorized directors and administrators must log on to the Plan of Work Software and choose to "Submit" the entire Plan of Work or Annual Report for submission at the Plan of Work Home Page. Only logged in directors and administrators have the ability to approve a Plan of Work or Annual Report for submission.

Once a director/administrator clicks the submit link on the home page, the "Submit" page will be displayed. Note that "By clicking this Submit button, I hereby certify that the submission of this Plan of Work is approved by me," means that this director is certifying approval and submission. By logging into the Plan of Work system and choosing to submit, the director/administrator is placing the equivalent of his/her signature on the document.

Each director and administrator for the Plan and Report must do this for both the 2009 – 2013 Plan of Work Update and 2007 Annual Report. Once approved by all authorized directors and administrators, the software will put the Plan of Work or Annual Report in submitted mode. This

means the state can no longer edit the plan until the system administrator (Bart Hewitt, or his designee) releases the plan back to the state for editing. If you find you need to do more editing after submitting a plan, contact Bart Hewitt at, pow@csrees.usda.gov or 202-720-0747.

Second Reporting Web Conference
Thursday, April 10, 2008 2-4 p.m. (Eastern)

Topics:
- Standard Progress Report Criteria
- Practical, realistic approaches to measuring impacts of basic research

To register, send an e-mail with your name, title, and institution to rwc@csrees.usda.gov by April 3, 2008. Also send topic suggestions to this address.

Also run the system check to ensure you can access the system by this date – ***attendee support on the day of the conference will be limited***. To run the system check, click on the meeting URL as listed below and click on "System Check" in the upper right-hand portion of the page.

Meeting URL: http://tinyurl.com/3xlqer

The CSREES Reporting Web Conference (www.csrees.usda.gov/rwc) has further information on this series, including recordings, slides, and answers to questions from previous conferences.

AREERA Plan of Work Dates

2007 Annual Report due by April 1, 2008

2009 - 2013 Plan of Work Update due by April 1, 2008.

For more information on the Plan of Work, e-mail the Plan of Work staff at pow@csrees.usda.gov, or call Bart Hewitt, 202-720-0747.