

Focusing on Factor 4, Level F Criteria

GS-15 scientists preparing case materials—and management officials and panelists who review those materials—must be cognizant of Factor 4/Level F criteria established by the Department. (See Manual 431.3-ARS, Exhibit 2.)

Scientists must clearly address the criteria they believe they satisfy. Scientists preparing case writeups for Supergrade Panel must also complete ARS Form 229 (Special Form – Factor 4, Level F Criteria). Criterion entries must demonstrate *recency*—optimally within the past five years.

Listed below are illustrative examples of activities which do and do not satisfy the intent of each Level F criterion.

Criterion 1: Has received honors and awards from major national or international organizations for accomplishments

These and comparable awards *do satisfy* standard intent:

- receipt of Secretary of Agriculture Honor Awards, or,
- receipt of technology transfer awards (ARS and Federal Laboratory Consortium), or,
- selection as Area or ARS Scientist of the Year, or,
- receipt of research or scientific merit awards from societies or other government entities (domestic, foreign, or international), or,
- election to leadership positions in national or international scientific and professional societies, or
- election as society Fellow *based on research accomplishments*

These and comparable awards *do not* satisfy standard intent:

- *nomination*, but not receipt, of major awards
- ARS performance awards (including Certificates of Merit, Extra Effort, Spot, etc.)
- EEO and other social or non-scientific awards
- Federal Executive Board awards
- lifetime achievement awards not based on scientific work
- distinguished alumnus awards
- military awards not based on scientific work
- Center, Laboratory, or other local Scientist of the Year
- speaking, presentation, or collaboration invitations
- grantsmanship/co-principal investigator status

Criterion 2: Is sought as an advisor and consultant on scientific and technological programs and problems which extend well beyond own field (illustrate the impact of your personal research on science beyond the scope of your *current research assignment as specified in Factor 1 of your case writeup*; document concisely and provide the names of knowledgeable contacts)

These and comparable activities *do satisfy* standard intent:

- application of a methodology developed from your research program to another area as part of technology application or development, or,
- development of scientific understanding of a system which is subsequently applied to the development of ARS or other national policy, for example
 - a soybean pathologist sought as advisor on problems of marine pathogens
 - achieving sex selection in dairy cattle, then advising on its application in human fertility research
 - developing pathogen models in livestock that are subsequently applied to other species
 - developing an analytical technique in one field which is subsequently applied to another field of science
 - developing an analytical technique in one field which is being applied to another field of science, or,
- managing competitive grants program panels (show how your *individual influence* extends beyond your field), or
- serving as journal editor or associate editor (same as above)

These and comparable activities *do not* satisfy standard intent:

- a soybean pathologist sought as advisor on problems of maize pathogens
- achieving sex selection in dairy cattle, then advising on its application in goats
- an expert in soil amendments on the Great Plains advising on soil amendments in China
- consulting with in-house, external Federal agency, State, industry, or foreign scientists and institutions regarding a given area closely related to your current assignment
- serving as editorial board member

Criterion 3: Serves as a recruiting attraction for recent graduates or visiting scientists

These and comparable situations *do satisfy* standard intent:

- party specifically wants to work with *you*, or,
- party brings own funds or at least do not cost ARS anything, or,
- party is present for at least one month, or,
- party generates a product (paper, report, presentation, etc.) based on working with you (indicate product by number from the case writeup Publications list)

These and comparable situations *do not* satisfy standard intent:

- when the *program* (facilities, funding, uniqueness)—not you—is the attraction
- serving as a college recruiter
- being an adjunct or full professor
- having graduate or undergraduate students in your laboratory
- hiring postdoctoral research associates to work in your laboratory
- merely filling SY vacancies (must show that *you* were the recruiting attraction)
- serving on graduate committees or mentoring graduate students
- conducting facility tours/program briefings/field days
- advising extension services
- graduate or visiting scientist visits for less than a month
- party receives a stipend or other government or school compensation from your unit
- party ends tour without a tangible product (or at least one that is well under way)

Criterion 4: Personal competence is likely to be a major consideration in parent Service, Department, or other governmental agency sponsorship of programs in his or her field

These and comparable activities *do satisfy* standard intent:

- leadership impacting ARS National Program design or content, or,
- serving as OSQR Scientific Quality Review Officer, or,
- influencing program or policy direction or content of USDA client agencies (e.g., NRCS, FS, FSIS, APHIS, AMS, FAS, NIFA) or other Federal or international agencies (e.g., NASA, ESA, JSA, BLM, USEPA, NIH, USGS, USFWS, DHS, DOD, USACOE, CIA, NOAA, UNWHO, UNIAEA, UNESCO, OECD, USAID), or,
- influencing university research program direction or content, or,
- influence State extension service program content, or
- increased base funding as a result of personal accomplishments/recognition, or,
- receipt of substantial competitive grant or other “soft” funding as a result of personal accomplishments/recognition

These and comparable activities *do not* satisfy standard intent:

- society committee or program work, or officer service
- university course content
- writing a CRIS project or laboratory review presentation
- defending a CRIS project during OSQR review
- implementing a unit or center redirection decided by others
- GenBank submissions

(2/10)