HATCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
USDA PROJECT OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Introduction

The Hatch Manual states: "Project proposals shall be written in a format set forth in Appendix D, and shall be supported by a certification that the project proposal was developed pursuant to the station's approved peer review procedure." These instructions describe the format, the review, and the approval processes for new and revised projects.

The purpose of the project proposal is to define the research problem in a clear-cut and precise manner and to justify the expenditure of funds. In developing the proposal, the project leaders should define the problem area with precision and write a set of objectives that can be completed in three to five years, or on which considerable progress can be made in this period.

All research projects are entered into the nationwide CRIS system. The CRIS information is accessible to policymakers, other researchers, and any other interested person. In recent years, the system has become heavily used by non-technical sources and this has sharpened the need for these outlines to communicate accurately to an ever wider audience that the work is relevant to the public need as well as to science, and to document that the research is evaluated at appropriate intervals to assure continued progress toward stated objectives. However, the system is useless if the outlines do not describe the research being conducted and if the results reported under a project are unrelated to the approved outline. In these cases, the research cannot be justified in accordance with the rules governing the use of the funds.

Initiating a New or Revised Project

Procedures for initiating a new project or for revising an existing project entail:

1. Preparing a station project outline in accordance with the format prescribed below and submitting 1 copy to the station director through the department head. (Project outlines are now submitted in CRIS as PDF files.)

2. Abstracting the essential features of the objective and procedures sections from the project outline for CRIS entry and submit CRIS forms AD-416 and AD-417 along with the project outline.

3. The project outline will be reviewed and approved in accordance with the peer review system and station administration.

Specific Instructions for Project Outline

The following outline explains what is expected in a new or revised project outline to meet the USDA format requirements. The outline should not exceed 10 pages in its text from the justification through the cooperation and signature sections. The heading on the proposal should be Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

1. <u>Project number (OKL0XXXX)</u> – Unless a revision of an existing project, the number is assigned by the director's office by contacting Sheila Julian.

2. <u>Title</u> – A brief, clear designation of the subject of the research. The title by itself should give a good indication what the project is about. The length should be limited to 140 characters including letters, symbols, and spaces.

3. <u>Justification</u> – This should be a statement of the overall problem that needs solving, how the research proposed will contribute to its solution, the gaps in the knowledge that the proposed research will fill, why the work needs to be done now, and if the work is successful, what will be the benefits.

4. <u>Previous work and present outlook</u> – A brief summary (no more than three pages) covering pertinent previous work on the problem. The status of current research, including the work of the project leader, should be cited. In addition, indicate the additional information needed to which the project proposed is expected to contribute. Literature citations should be listed at the end of the project outline. A critical evaluation should be made in the case of a new or revised project in an existing program and the publications that have come from the project should be listed as a separate section of the literature citation.

5. <u>Objectives</u> – A clear, complete, and logically arranged set of statements of the specific objectives of the project. Use as many objectives as there are specific problems to be attacked. Objectives should be sufficiently specific to allow considerable progress toward their completion during the life of the project.

6. <u>Procedures</u> – A statement of the essential working plans and methods to be used in attaining each of the stated objectives. The procedures should correspond to the objectives as listed and be sufficient to provide the reviewers a clear description of the experimental methods to be used and how the data will be collected and statistically analyzed. Initial phases to be undertaken should be designated. The location of the work and facilities and equipment needed, including land area at the research stations, should be indicated. In summary, the statements on procedure should show that the research has been carefully planned and should provide for changes when they are necessary to improve the work.

7. <u>Probable Duration</u> – An estimate of the maximum time likely to be required to complete the research and to publish the results as originally planned. However, projects will usually be limited to three to five years with a maximum duration of five years. Projects may be revised and may also be continued for additional five-

year periods. Projects are considered to be revised rather than new when they continue at least some phases of the original project with methods or work plans.

8. <u>Personnel</u> – List the project leader, co-leader, cooperators, and other technical workers anticipated to be assigned to the project. Indicate the percentage of time each will be allocated to the project.

9. <u>Institutional Units Involved</u> – Each subject matter unit in the agricultural experiment station and any other units of the institution contributing essential services or facilities are to be listed. The responsibilities of each should be indicated. Include land, equipment, and facilities that will be needed at the outlying station or on farmer-cooperator farms.

10. <u>Cooperation</u> – Indicate units of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, other experiment stations, institutions, or agencies cooperating formally or informally on the project. List the regional project if the project is to contribute to it.

11. <u>Signatures</u> – Provide signatures for the project leader, department head, and the station director.
    Instructions for Preparing the Research Resume (CRIS Form AD-416)
        And The Classification of Research (CRIS Form AD-417)

    Instructions for Preparing the Research Resume (CRIS Form AD-416)
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1. Please complete the CRIS forms according to the CRIS website (get from you departmental contact) or submit your information to the departmental contact to input on the website.

2. The classification fields of form AD-417 will be completed in the director's office.

Peer Review

1. <u>Purpose</u> – Peer reviews are required for each project. The purpose of this peer review is to give scientist input for the following:

    a. Insure completeness of the project outline
    b. Evaluate relevance of the proposed research
    c. Evaluate quality and scientific value of the research
    d. Consider opportunities for cooperation with other individuals or units
    e. Determine whether the proposed methodology can provide the information desired
    f.   Provide opportunity for the project leader to interact with reviewers and make adjustments as appropriate
    g. Provide USDA with assurance, project by project, that the process has

been followed.

The station peer review committee for a project will consist of at least three faculty members appointed by the Department Head or PI. At least one of the reviewers will be from a department other than the department submitting the project. The project outline is circulated to the peer reviewers along with a review form for consideration. The Director's office will approve, reject, or request a revision of the project.

The department may review the projects as it deems appropriate. On clearing the department, the project outline is submitted to the Station Director by the department head. The proposal is checked by the Director's office for administrative detail.