

Multistate Research Fund Impact Project Update
2017 Annual Report and Fy18 Q1(December 1, 2017 – March 5, 2018)
SUMMARY

Impact Statements

- 23 impact statements published in 2017 (2x 2016 output thanks to improved triage and expedited review processes).
- 3 impact statements published in Q1
- All impact statements broadly distributed to AES directors, NIFA leadership, Regional Offices, and committee members.
- Impact statements were frequently featured by NIFA and industry groups. For example:
 - NC-170 was featured in the *NIFA Update* from February 21, 2018:
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDANIFA/bulletins/1dcac2f>
 - NC-170: “Sara, this is really awesome... We’ll amplify the message and share with the secretary’s office and with the WH... Josh, a number of states are represented – be good to alert staff.” – Sonny Ramaswamy
 - S-294 featured on AgIsAmerica website, Facebook, and twitter on December 11:
<http://agisamerica.org/14-land-grant-universities-work-together-to-improve-food-safety-practices-and-quality-control/>
 - Irrigation times article featured material from W3128 impact statement:
<http://www.modernpubsonline.com/OA406ys/IrrigationTodayJan18/html/index.html?page=34&orig=reader>
 - Also picked up by Western Farmer-Stockman:
<http://www.westernfarmerstockman.com/technology/irrigation-group-recognizes-innovators>
- View/download all Impact Statements at <https://www.multistateresearchimpacts.org/impact-statements>

Social Media

- 2017 twitter activity was up across all metrics—posts, impressions, retweets, and link clicks.
- Maria Jirele began working as the Social Media Specialist on January 5, 2018, at 10 hours per week
- Since then, we have:
 - Designed a new logo for the Multistate Research Fund Impacts Program to use on our social media platforms so that they look more professional and consistent
 - Created and launched the Multistate Research Fund Impacts Program [facebook](#)
 - Improved the [website](#) so that it is more attractive, easier to navigate, provides more useful information, and more consistent with our social media platforms
 - Created a plan for posting weekly content and increasing/engaging with followers
- Social media engagement and website visits are up in Q1. We continue to evaluate posts to optimize their effectiveness.

Impact Writing Workshops

- In 2017, our team delivered 8 workshops to multistate committees, colleges*, and outside groups*.
- In 2018, one MRF activity in each region will receive Impact Writing Workshops at their annual meetings
 - NC1193: February 1 in Orlando, FL
 - S1032: May 22-23 in Washington, DC
 - W2006: September 17 in Boise, ID
 - NE—TBD
- Feedback collected via post-workshop surveys is positive. Workshop participants consistently report increased knowledge and satisfaction with presenters’ knowledge, delivery of materials, and rate the workshop as effective and engaging.

- Key takeaways from participants' evaluation comments:
 - The skills and knowledge that participants gained and the aspects of their work that they will do differently after attending match our intended goals for the workshop.
 - Many participants felt that the opening ice breaker exercise was good, but lasted for too long
 - Many participants felt more time was needed for the practice exercises.
 - Many participants wanted more examples of good impact statements during the presentation and to take away.

** These workshops were performed as contract work. The host institution paid speaker fees and travel costs as per the contract. All other workshops provided by Sara Delheimer and Sarah Lupis were provided under Impact Program and/or WAAESD scope of work. All Impact Writing Workshops are listed in this annual report in order to indicate the broad use and value of the workshop and materials originally created by the Impact Program.*

Meetings & Professional Development

- January 2017 | Washington, D.C. | Sara Delheimer and Sarah Lupis
 - Met with kglobal to develop plans for impact statement distribution and improved formatting for social media
- June 2017 | New Orleans, LA | Sara Delheimer and Sarah Lupis
 - Participated in the Association for Communications Excellence annual meeting
- September 2017 | San Francisco, CA | Sara Delheimer
 - Participated in the World Conference of Science Journalists
- January 2018 | Baton Rouge, LA | Sara Delheimer
 - participated in the National Impact Database's annual impact writing meeting
- Sarah Lupis regularly participates in CMC and NIDB calls

2018 Goals & Objectives

In 2018, the Multistate Research Fund Impacts Program's Director and Impact Writer will continue to perform all duties outlined in the 2017-2022 scope of work. In addition, we hope to emphasize the following work in 2018:

- Developing more attractive and useful Impact Statement formats;
- Increasing the number of Impact Statements developed;
- Supervising and assisting the Social Media Specialist with the development and implementation of an improved social media strategy, the success of which will be indicated by positive trends in the number of platforms, posts, followers, and engagement;
- Improving the Multistate Research Impacts website so that it includes more resources and is easier to navigate;
- Refining the Multistate Research Fund Impacts Program brand;
- Coordinating with NIFA and kglobal to regularly feature multistate research project stories in e-newsletters and on websites and social media; and
- Updating materials and determining best practices for delivering Impact Writing Workshop to multistate research project groups (see selection guidelines in Appendix D) and others.

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