2024 agInnovation Excellence in Multistate Research Award

Purpose

The fundamental mandate of the Multistate Research authority compels State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) to *interdependently* collaborate in projects that two or more states share as a priority, but for which no one state could address singularly. Demonstration of interdependence is a high standard and has become a hallmark of the Multistate Research Program's management objectives.

The purpose of the agInnovation Excellence in Multistate Research Award program is to annually recognize those station scientists who are conducting exemplary multistate activities and enhance the visibility of the multistate program. A recipient Multistate Project will be selected from the pool of nominees submitted by the five regional research associations (NCRA, NERA, SAAESD, WAAESD, and ARD), and judged by the agInnovation Science and Technology Committee (STC) to exhibit sustained, meritorious, and exceptional multistate research activities.

Award

The State Agricultural Experiment Station (SAES) Directors have approved a monetary recognition of $15,000 from the Hatch Multistate Research Fund (MRF) for the winner of the Excellence in Multistate Research Award. Up to $5,000 is available to cover travel for members of the recipient project (typically the Administrative Advisor and Chair or their designees) to attend the awards ceremony at the agInnovation Annual Meeting. The remaining $10,000, and any unused travel funds, are available to support activities which enhance and contribute to the research and/or outreach objectives of that multistate project, consistent with the appropriate use of Hatch MRF. Use of these funds is a project committee decision made in conjunction with its Administrative Advisor.

Eligibility

Any current regional Multistate Project (research, ERA, CC) listed in NIMSS (www.nimss.org) is eligible for consideration for an Excellence in Multistate Research Award. **The nomination is predominantly based on the five-year project period, although outcomes and impacts over the course of the project's lifespan may be considered. A nomination that was submitted in previous years should indicate advances made since the previous submission in the transmission correspondence of the nomination packet.**

The Multistate Research authority allows other non-SAES partners to join in these project-based collaborations. Thus, many multistate projects include extension specialists as members, as well as Agricultural Research Service or Forest Service research scientists. In addition, many projects have private sector and non-land-grant participants. Moreover, the majority of multistate projects have participants from more than a single region, with many having representation from all regions such that they are national in scope.

Basis for Nomination

Each of the five regional research associations may nominate one Multistate Project chosen from the entire national portfolio of active projects. An individual project can document collaborative activities with one or more different multistate projects, if applicable, within the appropriate nomination criteria. Each regional nomination must illustrate how the project addresses at least one of the Grand Challenges outlined at http://escop.info/roadmaptext/ so that relevant success stories may be posted on the agInnovation website.

Nominations shall be made to the Chair of the respective regional Multistate Research Committee (MRC) or Multistate Activities Committee (MAC) via the regional Executive Director's office. The documentation for this type of nomination should be sufficient to allow the review committee members to evaluate the nomination according to the criteria listed below.

Criteria and Evaluation

Successful selections from regional nominations advanced to the national competition for the Excellence in Multistate Research Award will demonstrate high standards of scientific quality, research relevance to a regional or national priority, multistate collaboration on the problem's solution, and professional leadership in the conduct of the project.

All nominated projects, in the required 4-page format, shall be evaluated using the same criteria (with weights shown) based on the Project's:

- Issue, problem or situation in context of Grand Challenge(s) addressed (5%)
- Objectives (5%)
- Accomplishments predominantly based upon the past five-year project period as
    - **Outputs** (the project's products and deliverables, 10%)
    - And qualitative and quantitative descriptions of social, economic, ecological, and(or) environmental benefits related to relevant Grand Challenge(s) as:
        - **Short-term outcomes** (how has the project created awareness, 5%);
        - **Medium-term outcomes** (how has the project changed behavior, 5%);
        - **Long-term outcomes** (how has the project changed condition, 5%);
        - **Impacts** (what are the direct, indirect, and/or anticipated global benefits; how is society and the world better off, 10%)
- Added value and synergistic activities across mission areas:
    - Multi-disciplinary activities (10%)
    - Multi-functional integrated activities (10%)
    - Additional partnerships, associations, or collaborations beyond land-grant universities (e.g., private, for-profit, non-profit, government and non-government agencies;10%)
    - Emphasize what the committee did together that would not have been accomplished with individual work (10%)
- Evidence of multi-institutional and leveraged funding with examples of sources (10%)
- Summary of participating institutions and units (5%)

Selection Process

The STC will serve as the review panel. The review panel will select from the annual group of regional nominees a national winner in time for public announcement and award presentation at the agInnovation Annual Meeting each year. All nominated projects will be evaluated using the same criteria.

Award and Presentation

The national winning project will be recognized by the agInnovation Chair and USDA NIFA Administrator during the Awards Program held at the agInnovation Annual Meeting. Each regional nomination will be included in the APLU Awards Booklet "A Community of Scholars Honoring Excellence" by project number and title, technical committee chair, administrative advisor, and participating institutions. A National Awardee narrative will be created by the MRF Impact Writer and submitted to the STC Executive Vice-Chair. The title of the national winning project will be added to a plaque located at the USDA NIFA Headquarters. Additionally, the national award winner's application will be shared as an example of a successful application when next year's call for nominations is distributed.

Timeline

- November/December – Announcement sent to Directors and Administrators, Administrative Advisors and NIMSS participants by agInnovation Chair
- February 28 – Nominations due at Offices of the Executive Directors
- March – Nominations reviewed by regional Multistate Research or Multistate Activities Committees and recommendations submitted to regional associations
- March/April – Regional associations approve regional nominations at Spring meetings
- April/May - Regional associations review, edit and finalize their nomination prior to the final submission
- May 15 – Associations submit final regional nominations to STC Committee via the regional association supporting STC (**pdf or word document**)
- June –STC Committee reviews regional nominations and selects the national winner
- July – National winner announced in the agenda brief at the agInnovation Executive Committee Meeting held at Joint COPs
- July– STC Executive Vice-chair collects information from regional associations, secures project pictures, and submits materials to APLU for booklet and program script; NIFA notified for USDA NIFA Headquarters plaque inscription
- September – National winner presentation at agInnovation meeting
- November – National award announced at APLU Annual Meeting

Nomination Format

(The nomination should be a very concise summary and must be in this format.)

Nominating Region: _____

Nominator: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Project or Committee Number and Title: _____

Technical Committee Chair: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Administrative Advisor: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Project Summary (noting the following**):**

- Issue, problem or situation in context of Grand Challenge(s) addressed (5%)
- Objectives (5%)
- Accomplishments predominantly based upon the past five-year project period as
    - **Outputs** (the project's products and deliverables, 10%)
    - And qualitative and quantitative descriptions of social, economic, ecological, and(or) environmental benefits related to relevant Grand Challenge(s) as:
        - **Short-term outcomes** (how has the project created awareness, 5%);
        - **Medium-term outcomes** (how has the project changed behavior, 5%);
        - **Long-term outcomes** (how has the project changed condition, 5%);
        - **Impacts** (what are the direct, indirect, and/or anticipated global benefits; how is society and the world better off (10%)
- Added value and synergistic activities across mission areas
    - Multi-disciplinary activities (10%)
    - Multi-functional integrated activities (10%)
    - Additional partnerships, associations, or collaborations beyond land-grant universities (e.g., private, for-profit, non-profit, government and non-government agencies; 10%)
    - Emphasize what the committee did together that would not have been accomplished with individual work (10%)
- Evidence of multi-institutional and leveraged funding with examples of sources (10%)
- Participating institutions and units (5%) **(page 4 only)**

Nominations should be **no more than 3 single-spaced pages** (Times Roman 12 point and one-inch margins) plus a 1-page summary of participating institutions and units (alphabetized) for a **total of 4 pages**. Regions may utilize other information in selecting their nominee. The final regional nomination should be submitted by email to the Offices of the regional Executive Directors, by **c.o.b. February 28, 2024**:

Chris Hamilton, North Central <christina.hamilton@wisc.edu>
David Leibovitz, Northeast <david_leibovitz@uri.edu>
Cindy Morley, South <cmorley@uark.edu>
Jennifer Tippetts, West <jennifer.tippetts@waaesd.org>
Lisa Williamson, ARD <lmwilliamson1@ncat.edu>