

NIFA Update and Hints on 2009 Annual Report (February 11, 2010)

Presenter: Bart Hewitt

1. Are there any plans to add a program evaluator to the accountability team
The accountability team is already a part of the Office of Planning and Accountability. There are two full-time professional evaluators already on staff (Djimé Adoum and Henry Doan). The accountability team has full access to these evaluators when needed.
2. Can you delete an old, or existing planned program? I know you have that option for newly added planned program.
Yes. You may delete an old, or existing planned program in the Plan of Work Update. You may not delete it in the Annual Report. You must address your previously approved Planned Programs in some way in the Annual Report.
3. I'm still confused about whether I mention "other" activities on this report. The FAQ says to mention other non-formula activities if they support our mission. Please clarify this.
There is a section of the Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Reform Act (AREERA) which states that the Plan of Work should contain a description of the manner in which research and extension, including research and extension activities funded other than through formula funds, will cooperate to address the critical issues in the State, including the activities to be carried out separately, the activities to be carried out sequentially, and the activities to be carried out jointly. Thus, if other funded activities contribute to the formula funded activities you can mention and take credit for these activities in the Plan of Work and Annual Report.
4. Does each of the five priority programs need to be distinctly named or can wording to reflect those priorities be incorporated into existing programs? Can we add the priority area title to an existing title, e.g., Add "Sustainable Energy" to "Biofuels and Biobased Products" to be a new program titled "Sustainable Energy, Biofuels, and biobased products"?
We need the Planned Programs titles to be exact and only include information relevant to that priority. That way we can track dollars, FTEs, and outcomes to just those priorities.
5. Would you elaborate on what you mean by mentioning activities in the annual report that are "touched" by formula dollars?
If any of the four major formula grant dollars are used for any program or project, then that information needs to be captured in the Plan of Work and Annual Report even if it also uses other grant dollars.
6. In 2012-2016 POW, are other plans allowed that are not of the five new areas or will it be 100% of all funds must be within these five areas. dollars?
You may include other Planned Programs in the Plan of Work and Annual Report. NIFA recognizes that not all you do may fit into these five priority areas.

7. Do you know what the program might be around this topic at the administrative officers meeting?
There will be two sessions the Office of Planning and Accountability will be conducting at this meeting. One will be an Update on the Plan of Work and Annual Report of Accomplishments, the other will be on REEport, CRIS, and the Partnership Dashboard.

8. We have heard that investigators receiving salary on formula funds will be precluded from applying for competitive grants. Is this correct?
No.