

General

Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station (KAES) projects are the mechanism used by the College of Agriculture, Food, & Environment to plan, develop, and monitor station research programs. This system is a legal requirement for all institutions receiving USDA formula funds and provides a basis of accountability for state and federal research support provided. In addition, development and peer review of proposals offers one of the best opportunities to mentor new faculty and to assist others as they strive to redirect or enhance established programs.

Project Scope

KAES project proposals typically are of sufficient scope to provide a reasonably comprehensive description of the project director's (PD's) research program. However, a single project should not combine unrelated objectives. Faculty who are working in two or more disparate areas should consider maintaining more than one active project. KAES projects may closely correspond to extramurally funded projects.

Timetable

Approval of projects by peer reviewers and USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) may require significant time. Faculty members should plan to submit a new or revised proposal at least six months, and preferably nine months, prior to the expiration of a current project. Account numbers cannot be assigned until a project is formally approved by NIFA. The maximum duration a project is five years (60 months). To find out who has an active project in the College of Agriculture, Food, & Environment as well as termination dates and other information, please see <https://acsg.uky.edu/project/>.

Requirements

1. Any tenure-track faculty member of the college who has 25 percent or more research DOE and is paid on KAES funds (federal or state matching dollars) must maintain an active project, either Hatch, Multi-State, McIntire-Stennis, or Animal Health. Projects with multiple PDs are permitted and encouraged, but this requirement will usually be satisfied for only the first investigator listed on the project. Others interested in developing a project should contact Lesley Oliver (lesley.oliver@uky.edu). Faculty with joint research and extension appointments are encouraged to consider a project, even if their research appointment is under 25%.
2. Failure to maintain an active project without justification and authorization, may affect allocation of KAES funding, performance evaluation, and other internal funding. Failure to maintain an active project will prevent your department from being able to allocate KAES funds to your program. This is most often in the form of faculty salary, grad student stipends and technical staff support.

3. Newly appointed faculty should submit a project proposal within one year of their appointment.

Procedures

- **The faculty member:** submits cover page and project description in the format described below to department chair.
- **The department chair:** conducts a thorough initial review of the proposal. Most chairs appoint a project review committee. Some chairs solicit reviews and oversee revision. Federal regulations require an acceptable peer review of all research projects.
- **The department chair:** following satisfactory revision and approval of the proposal by the department, submits the cover form and proposal in PDF format to the Director of the KAES by email attachment. The chair also sends the names, e-mail addresses, and organization affiliation of three suggested, confidential peer reviewers external to the department. These three items go to CAFEResearch@uky.edu.
- Submission by the chair signifies the project has been peer reviewed by scientists who are not participating in this project and who are qualified to conduct research in this area, the project has been appropriately revised in response to the peer review, and the reviewers, investigators, and chair agree that the project is scientifically sound, technically feasible, and the research plan adequately considers the resources available. Submission by the chair also signifies the project is consistent with the goals and mission of the department and KAES.
- Once the project has been submitted to the station director, a web-based process begins whereby the proposal is peer reviewed at the college level.
- **The KAES director:** appoints ad hoc reviewers (which may be internal or external to the college). The reviewers make a recommendation to the Director regarding approval, revision or rejection of the project, all through the web-based approval process.
- **The faculty member:** receives notification of the approval, request for revision, or rejection of the proposal and instructions for submitting the project to NIFA, as the last step of the web-based approval process.
- **Upon approval by KAES director,** PDs receive instructions from the Experiment Station for submitting the project initiation in the NIFA Reporting System (NRS)
- **Following NIFA approval,** PDs, and their chair and business officer receive e-mail notification from the Experiment Station regarding account numbers tied to the project.

Project Proposal Description

Format: Maximum proposal length is 20 pages, excluding references and cover page (see below). Use 1-inch margins and 12-point font. Double space text; single space references.

Title: A brief description of the subject of the research. The title, as clearly as possible, should reflect the objectives and scope of the project. (175 character limit)

Justification: Present in nontechnical terms (1) the importance of the problem to agriculture and rural life of the state or region; (2) reasons for doing the work (such as the needs the project will

full) and doing it at this time; and (3) ways in which public welfare (society as a whole) or scientific knowledge will be advanced.

Previous Work and Present Outlook: A brief summary of the previous research (citing important publications); status of current research; and the additional knowledge needed which the project is expected to provide. Literature citations, in accepted journal format, should be listed at the end of the project proposal.

Objectives: State definitively and concisely research objectives or hypotheses, with each numbered and presented as a single sentence. This should be a clear, complete, and logically arranged statement of the specific results to be achieved by the project.

Procedure/Methods/Approach: A statement of the essential working plans and methods to be used in attaining each of the stated objectives. Procedures should correspond to the objectives and follow the same order. Phases of the work to be undertaken currently should be designated. Location of the work and the facilities and equipment needed and available should be indicated. Wherever appropriate, the procedure should produce data suitable for statistical analysis. The procedure should reflect careful planning and should provide flexibility for changes if changes become necessary.

Probable Duration: An estimate of the maximum time likely to be required to complete the project and publish results. The maximum duration of a KAES project is five years. If at all possible, KAES projects should follow the federal fiscal year, October 1-September 30.

Financial Support: Estimated annual allotments as noted on the Project Proposal Cover Form, including salaries, current expense, travel, and equipment.

Personnel: A list of the leader(s) and other employees, including graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, assigned to this project.

Institutional Units Involved: Each subject-matter unit in KAES and any other units of the institution contributing essential services or facilities. The responsibilities of each should be indicated. Also list any advisory, coordinating, or directing committee, if applicable.

Cooperation: A statement listing USDA or other station, institutions, or agencies expected to cooperate formally or informally on the project. If this is a Multi-State project, include the research project number (i.e., S-1008).

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