

In recent months, the CALS Research Division has seen an increase in the number of USDA RFP's requiring a "Scientific Peer Review." This internal proposal review process must be in compliance with 7 CFR Part 3400.20. More specifically, research activities must be reviewed in compliance with 3400.21 and education & extension activities must be reviewed in compliance with 3400.22. (Attachment A)

To ensure that this review is conducted in a timely manner, the CALS Research Division is providing the following instructions for completing this review at the department level. **In most cases, a written notice certifying that an internal review has occurred must be completed by the CALS Associate Dean for Research prior to the submission deadline.** If the RFP does not require the peer review until the time of award, a PI may request a delay in submitting the peer review until a later date, however, the University will not be able to process an award until it can fully document that this process has occurred. Requests to delay this process will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Below are CALS' recommended steps for the Peer Review process:

1. When the department or PI identifies that the RFP includes a Scientific Peer Review requirement, the department should notify their preaward contact at the CALS Research Division.
2. Working with the department, the PI should identify at least two, but not more than three individuals to complete a peer review of the proposal. As stated in the federal guidance, peer reviewers are asked to provide an appraisal of the technical quality and relevance of the proposal and make a determination as to whether the proposal is appropriate for submission. Faculty peers are appropriate and may include USDA employees, but the review should not be conducted solely by USDA employees.
 - Peer reviewers should not include individuals named as a Co-PI/PD, collaborator, consultant, or individuals who are committing effort or being paid as part of the grant proposal. Also, a number of individuals have zero dollar appointments in CALS but are USDA employees. Please work with your department administrator or grants staff to ensure that you are not selecting only USDA employees to review your grant.
3. **Provide the peer reviewers with a copy of the proposal at least 10 days prior to submission.** Peer reviewers will need to review the proposal and complete the CALS Scientific Peer Review Form (Attachment B). The Peer Reviewer will also need to provide his/her biosketch, which should be attached to the Peer Review Form. Completed forms and biosketches may be returned to the PI or the designated department personnel.
4. Email the completed peer review forms and reviewers' biosketches to the CALS Research Division preaward contact. A copy of the proposal narrative should also be included in this email. **This should occur at least one week prior to the proposal submission deadline.**
5. The CALS Research Division will prepare the peer review materials and deliver them to the Associate Dean for Research. The Associate Dean for Research will review submitted documents. He/She will follow up with the department or the PI with any identified issues regarding the peer review or will provide a letter certifying that the peer review was conducted in compliance with the federal regulations.
6. The certification letter (Attachment C) signed by the Associate Dean for Research will be returned to the CALS Research Division for inclusion on the submitted proposal. A copy of the certification will also be sent back to the PI or department contact.

Documentation of the peer review process should be kept by the department, but will also be retained by the CALS Research Division for audit purposes. The CALS Research Division does not recommend attaching peer review documents to WISPER; however, if a department attaches the documents to a WISPER record the Research Division will not delete them.

University of Wisconsin-Madison
College of Agricultural & Life Sciences
Certification of
Scientific Peer and/or Merit Review for Special Grants
as required by USDA in accordance with
Section 3400-21 (Scientific Peer Review for Research Activities)
and
Section 3400.22 (Merit Review for Education and Extension Activities)

Project Title:

Principal Investigator/Project Director:

Type of Project:

_____ Research _____ Education/Extension _____ Combined Research-Extension

*Rating Scale: 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Very Good 5. Outstanding
(Must score 3 or better on items 1 and 2)

Table with 2 columns: Item description and Project Proposal Rating (1-5)*. Items include Technical Quality of Proposal, Relevance to national or regional goals, Probability of contribution to basic knowledge, Personnel available and qualified to do proposed work, Provision for cooperative effort, Adequacy of equipment and facilities available, and Probability that objectives will be reached in proposed duration.

General Comments:

I have reviewed and rated the Project Proposal and have not been involved in preparation nor will I be involved in the execution of this project.

Reviewer Signature

Date

Please attach a current biosketch to this review document

Attachment C

May 12, 2013

Special Research Grants Program
Pest Management Alternatives
USDA NIFA
Monte Johnson, National Program Leader
Division of Plant Sciences-Protection, Institute of Food Production & Sustainability
3409 Waterfront Centre
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

To Whom It May Concern:

I certify that a scientific peer review of the Proposal "*Insert Name of the Proposal*" submitted by Dr. "*Insert Name of PI*" has been conducted by "*two or three*" independent reviewers. The reviews are on file and I believe that they constitute a scientific peer review as required under 7 CFR Part 3400.20 and subsequent requirements under 7 CFR 3400.21. "*or insert 7 CFR 3400.22 if extension/outreach*"

Sincerely,

"Name of Associate Dean for Research"
Associate Dean for Research, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences
University of Wisconsin-Madison