

## NHAES FOUNDATIONAL PROGRAM

The core mission of the New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station is to responsibly steward federal and state public funds to support high-quality, impactful research and engagement activities related to agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and the environment. The research projects are inspired by local needs and questions and the outcomes help contribute to improving the economic, societal, and environmental well-being of New Hampshire's, regional, national, and global communities. The NHAES Foundational Program stewards public federal and state funds—appropriated under the provisions of the [Hatch Act of 1887 and McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962](#)—to help spark and facilitate scientific discoveries that answer questions for which answers do not yet exist.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, PURPOSE, AND PRIORITIES

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The provisions of the [Hatch and McIntire-Stennis Acts](#) rely on the concept that the individual State Experiment Stations are in the best position to identify and address the research necessary to serve the diverse communities across their respective states. The NHAES mission is to responsibly and ethically steward federal and state taxpayer funding to maximize the relevance, quality, productivity, outputs, and impacts of research projects with these funds. This includes basic and applied research activities that may have expected outcomes with longer or shorter time frames.

The NHAES Foundational Program helps fulfill this mission by facilitating research in [three USDA program types: Hatch, Hatch-Multistate, and McIntire-Stennis](#). This research facilitation reflects the Station's commitment to the land-grant mission: develop science for the public good. The Station helps bring together world-class scientists from across numerous disciplines to address locally-inspired, critical questions. Agriculture, food, natural resources, and environmental quality are, in different ways important to every single community in New Hampshire, and, as such, every person in the Granite State is considered a stakeholder of NHAES research.

### PROGRAM PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES

Scientific discovery is uncertain and often requires taking informed risks. Scientific discovery is also often an outcome of multi-year and even multi-decadal progress. The impacts of this progress can be widespread, especially in regards to agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and the environment—areas that affect everyone.

The scientific discovery process must, ultimately, begin somewhere. However, because the outcome of an experiment or a study is not known until the experiment is conducted, many individuals, private business, and even competitive federal and state granting programs may not be able or willing to take on the risks of this uncertainty. So, how does the scientific discovery process begin?

The federal-state public research funding partnerships established by the Hatch and McIntire-Stennis Acts and facilitated by the NHAES is one mechanism that provides scientists with the opportunities to begin answering questions to which answers do not yet exist. For researchers submitting proposals to the NHAES Foundational Program, it is key to place their ideas and project descriptions within the context of their work being at the forefront of a discovery process that, while uncertain, could significantly move forward both the science community and economic, environmental, and societal well-being.

As such, the central priority for the NHAES Foundational Program is to aid researchers in taking novel ideas that have a high likelihood of making significant impact (either in the short or long terms), developing those ideas into rigorous scientific studies that can yield initial insights (successes or failures), and leveraging those initial insights to grow and move forward the scientific process in partnership with external federal, state, and industry partners.

## ELIGIBILITY & AWARD INFORMATION

### ELIGIBILITY

The NHAES foundational program is available to all current College of Life Sciences and Agriculture tenure-track, research, and joint AES/Extension scientists. No scientist is eligible to receive funding for more than a single NHAES foundational program project at any one time.

Funding allocated to individuals whose rank changes to emerita/emeritus during an active NHAES project may, with prior approval and availability funding, continue being funded until the termination date of that active project.

Scientists who have never written an NHAES Foundational Program proposal are highly encouraged to participate in the [NHAES on-boarding series](#), which is designed to introduce researchers to the many facets of the Agricultural Experiment Station.

Early-in-career scientists whose long-run research goals align with the missions of the Hatch or McIntire-Stennis programs will participate in the *Exploratory Research in Sustainable Agroecosystem Science and Management* program in their first two years of their academic careers before writing their own NHAES Foundational Program proposal. The exploratory research program provides opportunities for early-in-career scientists to learn about the Agricultural

Experiment Station system and missions, develop best practices for writing a successful NHAES Foundational Program proposal, and begin working on research that would serve as the basis for a full proposal in the following year.

### FUNDING OVERVIEW

Research project funding cycles are based on the federal fiscal year (FFY) of October 1 through September 30. Approved standard Hatch, Hatch-Multistate, and McIntire-Stennis projects will have a three-year funding cycle. However, funding is allocated to projects on a year-by-year basis throughout the length of a project and cannot be carried across federal fiscal years.

At the federal level, Hatch-Multistate projects are approved for a five-year terms. However, NHAES project directors with Hatch-Multistate projects must go through a formal internal mid-project review during the third year of their project in order to secure funding for the final two years of the Hatch-Multistate term. See the *Post-Award Expectations* for additional information about the mid-project review.

Under compelling and unavoidable circumstances, a project director may request a one-year no-cost extension for an active project.

There is no maximum limit to the overall length of time for which funded investigators may maintain a consecutive or intermittent series of funded projects, if new proposals are continually approved through the competitive review and evaluation process.

### ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

NHAES foundational program funds may be expended on research supplies, domestic travel, hourly labor, and graduate or undergraduate student stipend (but not tuition or fees). Purchase of general office supplies (e.g., pens, paper) is not allowed per our federal funding statutes.

Tenure-track faculty salary is not funded in project budgets.

Any expenditures for foreign travel, equipment, and status labor (e.g., technicians hired in a benefitted position) must have the prior written approval of the NHAES Director. Expenditures that are not allowable within the NHAES foundational program funds will be moved to the project director's alternate funding source, such as their startup account, overhead return funds, or personal funds.

### PROJECT INITIATION TIMELINE

**Late-August:** Request for proposals is issued to eligible scientists.

**September:** Scientists are encouraged to discuss project ideas and proposal development strategies with the NHAES Director.

**Mid-November:** Submission deadline for proposals to the NHAES Foundational Program.

**December:** Internal reviewers are identified and proposals are assessed.

**Mid-January:** Internal reviewers meet to present project reviews and provide feedback and recommendations to the NHAES Director.

**Early-February:** Decisions, including requests for revisions, are communicated to project directors.

**Late-March:** Project directors of approved proposals submit their project's information within the USDA-NIFA Reporting System for review by the USDA. Requests for revisions are communicated to the project director and NHAES director.

**October 1:** Funding begins for projects that have been submitted and approved by the USDA-NIFA.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA & PROCESS

### INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS

The internal review process follows an approach commonly used by many external granting agencies, including the USDA.

#### Reviewer selection

After proposals are submitted via the secure NHAES electronic submission system, the NHAES Director reads each proposal to determine the topic areas across all submissions. Based on the topic areas in a particular proposal cycle, the NHAES Director identifies and recruits scientists at UNH who can serve as peer reviewers for proposals based on the closeness of reviewers' professional expertise to the research described in proposals. This ensures that proposals receive the most appropriate evaluation and constructive feedback.

Secondarily, to the extent possible, reviewers are identified based on their familiarity with the NHAES Foundational Program, either as being project directors of ongoing funded NHAES projects or of previous NHAES projects. This ensures that reviewers have the context for evaluating research proposals within the scope of the legislated program priorities.

#### Individual proposal review process

For each proposal, the review is a single-blind process. All proposals are submitted to a secure NHAES electronic submission portal. Within the portal, reviewers are assigned to specific proposals. Reviewers are then asked to complete an assessment form within the portal that follows the evaluation criteria, described in the *Criteria for Evaluating Project Proposals* section below.

## Reviewer panel meeting

Chaired by the NHAES Director, a 6-8 member reviewer panel is assembled as part of the internal review process. The panel consists of a subsample of identified reviewers in a particular funding cycle. Typically, reviewers who are panelists are those who review multiple proposals within a funding cycle and those who are particularly knowledgeable about the NHAES missions.

After individual project reviews have been submitted, the panel is assembled to collectively assess each proposal. For each proposal, one of the reviewers of the proposal presents to the panel a brief summary of the project, the major strengths, and the major weaknesses. Then, the review panel reflects on the assessment and has an open discussion to determine the project's viability. All discussions are confidential and only relevant, tangible outcomes of those discussions are summarized to the proposal's project director.

## Notification of review outcome

At the conclusion of the individual proposal review period and the panel review, the NHAES Director summarizes the feedback for each proposal and assesses the priority and funding recommendations of the reviewers and panel. Then, the NHAES Director provides a written summary of all evaluations (rather than directly providing the reviewers' reports, in order to project anonymity during the review process) to project directors who submitted a proposal.

Ultimately, the NHAES Director will make the final award decisions.

In many cases, projects for which funding is recommended, project directors will be asked to respond to the feedback provided during the review process. The process is intended to strengthen the research and engagement plan of proposals, and the NHAES is committed to ensuring that the strongest possible proposals are developed and initiated.

Project directors whose projects are not prioritized to be funded will be notified and provided a summary of the individual and panel reviews. Proposals may be resubmitted in the following year.

## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROJECT PROPOSALS

During the technical and merit review process, internal reviewers and the full panel will assess each proposal based on the following set of project characteristics.

### *Required components*

- Clear relevance to the Hatch and McIntire-Stennis program missions and priorities (as described in the *Program Description, Purpose, and Priorities* section above) and the related needs for research to overcome challenges and/or capture

opportunities to improve economic, environmental, and societal well-being of communities in New Hampshire, New England, and the United States.

- Scientific feasibility and the probability that successful completion of the project will lead to important new scientific information and/or useful technology.
- Evidence of contribution and moving forward of current, state-of-the-art scientific state within the problem area/discipline, based on a thorough literature review.
- Potential for significant impact of results on scientific peers and stakeholders. For projects that are more basic in nature, clearly describing how the initial, foundational research can lead to more applied outcomes and impacts in the future is key to demonstrate potential for significant impacts to stakeholders.
- Likelihood of leveraging NHAES project resources to apply for and receive external funding, including federal and state-level granting agencies and industry partnerships.
- Likelihood for publication of results to scientific peers and other appropriate audiences.
- Ability to measure or evaluate impacts and outcomes from the proposed project.
- An expectation for the availability of required resources (facilities and equipment, graduate or undergraduate students, technical assistance, required collaborators, etc.).
- Ability and potential impacts of engagement and outreach activities that disseminate research information to relevant stakeholders.
- For project directors who have had NHAES Foundational Program awards in the past, their abilities to meet previous project's goals and objectives, including completing their proposed research work, leveraging the project to garner (or at least actively apply for) external funding, producing manuscripts of their research that are submitted to peer-reviewed journals, effectively disseminating research to relevant stakeholders in New Hampshire and the region, meeting all post-award reporting responsibilities in a timely manner.

#### *Priority enhancing components*

- Opportunities for interdisciplinary and/or regional or national collaboration.
- Incorporating Extension professionals as active, integrated collaborators into multiple facets of the project, including the research design, implementation, and engagement components.
- Incorporating stakeholders as active, integrated collaborators into multiple facets of the project, including the research design, implementation, and engagement components.
- Relevance to the needs of underserved individuals, groups, or communities in the state, region, and nation.

#### **USDA REVIEW PROCESS**

After a project proposal successfully goes through the internal review process, the proposal must be submitted for review by a National Program Leader at the USDA-NIFA. Project information is

entered through the USDA NIFA Reporting System and is typically reviewed within 30-60 days of submission. If the USDA-NIFA requires amendments, they must be completed and the project resubmitted to the USDA-NIFA.

Ultimately, it is not sufficient to receive project approval from the internal review process. Final approval must be recommended by the USDA-NIFA to receive project funding.

## PROPOSAL FORMAT & CONTENT

### PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals do not have a page length limit, although most proposals range between 12 and 15 pages, excluding the cited literature and personnel/collaborators sections. To ensure consistency, please use a 12-point font size, single spacing, one-inch margins on all sides, and numbered pages.

Each proposal must include the [standard title page, which you can download using this link](#). After the title page, begin a new page. All other sections can be written continuously (rather than each beginning on a new page).

Proposals must include all listed sections below in the *Proposal Content*. Proposals that do not follow the format and/or do not include all of the sections will be returned immediately and provided a one-week resubmission deadline.

### PROPOSAL CONTENT

#### I. Title Page

Please [use this link to download a template for the standard title page](#). Complete all the required fields in the template. Include a short but clear project title that captures the key issue proposed to be investigated.

For McIntire-Stennis proposals, ensure that after the Title line, you include the number(s) of federally mandated topic areas that every project must address. The following federally mandated topic areas are [listed in the McIntire-Stennis documentation](#):

1. reforestation and management of land for the production of crops of timber and other related products of the forest;
2. management of forest and related watershed lands to improve conditions of water flow and to protect resources against floods and erosion;

3. management of forest and related rangeland for production of forage for domestic livestock and game and improvement of food and habitat for wildlife; management of forest lands for outdoor recreation;
4. protection of forest land and resources against fire, insects, diseases, or other destructive agents;
5. utilization of wood and other forest products; and
6. development of sound policies for the management of forest lands and the harvesting and marketing of forest products; and such other studies as may be necessary to obtain the fullest and most effective use of forest resources.

## **II. Problem and Justification**

Clearly describe the problem(s) to be addressed. Write clearly and compellingly, including the importance of the research as it relates to agriculture or forestry and New Hampshire, regional, national and international priorities as relevant to the particular funding source (Hatch, Hatch-Multistate, or McIntire-Stennis), as well as to the state of the scientific discipline.

When describing the problem(s) and justification(s) for conducting the research, please ensure that there is a clear connection to the stated missions of each program.

### *Hatch*

The purpose of this funding is to conduct agricultural research programs at State Agricultural Experiment Stations in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Insular Areas. Hatch activities are broad and includes research on all aspects of agriculture, including soil and water conservation and use; plant and animal production, protection, and health; processing, distribution, safety, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products; forestry, including range management and range products; multiple use of forest rangelands, and urban forestry; aquaculture; home economics; human nutrition; rural and community development as it relates to agriculture; sustainable agriculture; and molecular biology and biotechnology inasmuch as work can contribute to agricultural advancements. Research may be conducted on problems of local, State, regional, or national concern. The Hatch Act aligns with the following USDA Strategic Goals:

Strategic Goal 1: Ensure USDA Programs Are Delivered Efficiently, Effectively, With Integrity and a Focus on Customer Service;

Strategic Goal 2: Maximize the Ability of American Agricultural Producers To Prosper by Feeding and Clothing the World;

Strategic Goal 3: Promote American Agriculture Products and Exports

Strategic Goal 4: Facilitate Rural Prosperity and Economic Development;

Strategic Goal 5: Strengthen the Stewardship of Private Lands Through Technology and Research;



Strategic Goal 6: Ensure Productive and Sustainable Use of Our National Forest System Lands; and  
Strategic Goal 7: Provide all Americans Access to a Safe, Nutritious, and Secure Food Supply.

Further, recent directives from USDA-NIFA specify “every Hatch research project must have clear and documented relevance as part of the project to agricultural science. Thus, in your project initiations, relevance to agricultural science needs to be evident or explicit.”

#### *Hatch-Multistate*

The purpose of the Hatch-Multistate program is similar to that of the Hatch program. In addition, the missions are:

1. To conduct research by institutions within a State and by institutions in multiple States to solve problems that concern more than one State; and,
2. To conduct research that meets the objectives of a specific multistate project as defined by that project.

Use the [National Information Management and Support System](#) to search across active Hatch-Multistate projects to determine whether a particular project aligns with your research interests. Project directors can participate in projects within any region, and are not limited to projects in the Northeast region.

#### *McIntire-Stennis:*

The purpose of this funding is to increase forestry research in the production, utilization, and protection of forestland; to train future forestry scientists; and to involve other disciplines in forestry research. The eligible forestry research mandated areas as defined by the McIntire-Stennis legislation are described in the *Title Page* section above. Additionally, projects should address at least one of the McIntire-Stennis Strategic Plan goals to:

1. Create the future generation of forestry educators, scientists, and practitioners through graduate education.
2. Build and sustain strategic relationships that enhance overall program effectiveness and support.
3. Communicate and educate the importance, impact, and successes of the McIntire-Stennis Program.

### **III. Literature Review and Past Project Assessment**

Summarize the literature that represents the state of knowledge directly relevant to the proposed project, provide critical background information, and explore key research

methods and/or techniques related to the problem in Section II. Please focus on the most important and more recent literature; if recent literature is lacking in this area, justify why it remains a compelling area for inquiry (e.g., significant new topics lacking information rather than those lacking scientific importance).

For continuing projects or new projects by directors who have completed previous projects, summarize the information and metrics of how the current/past project helps underpin the work in the proposal. Include the key findings and activities (research and engagement) from current/past project and, if applicable, citations from published work resulting from the current/past project that help provide context for how your proposal builds on your work. This should complement the broader literature review by providing context of how your own previous and proposed work will help advance remaining knowledge gaps and opportunities.

Investigators new to NHAES funding or returning after multiple years without NHAES funding should use this section to summarize your non-NHAES funded activities that can complement the literature review by providing context of how your own previous and proposed work will help advance remaining knowledge gaps and opportunities.

Provide references for all citations in the *Literature Cited* section. Please ensure that all citations have references, and that all references are cited before submitting the proposal.

#### **IV. Goals and Objectives**

In the context of the proposal, a **goal** represents a broad perspective of the purpose, service, major achievement, or milestone this project seeks to provide. It represents a "bigger picture" but still tangible and achievable endpoint that your project is seeking to achieve. The goal or goals should represent answering the "Why is this project important?" question.

For each goal statement, the **objectives** represent measurable steps that will be taken to move toward achieving the stated goal. There is no minimum or maximum number of objectives to include for a project, but all objectives should be specific and attainable within the duration of the project and with the available resources. Objectives should represent answering the "How will you strive to meet the goal?" question.

When putting together both the goal(s) and, within each goal, the objectives, please reflect on the fact that there is a finite project length and resources (including project directors' time) are limited. Therefore, please keep in mind that there should be a balance between project goals and objectives that are innovative and achievable.

All proposals must include an engagement and outreach goal and associated objectives. This helps ensure that there is a plan for disseminating the research findings to relevant academic and non-academic stakeholders. When describing your engagement and

outreach objectives, please ensure to include information about your project's target audiences—individuals, groups, market segments, or communities—served by the project. Where appropriate, you should also identify population groups such as racial and ethnic minorities and those who are socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged.

*Hatch-Multistate Proposals:* Every Hatch-Multistate research project has a list of stated, approved objectives. These are typically fairly broad in order to capture the multistate nature and breadth of expertise of the participants. Project directors applying for Hatch-Multistate awards should specifically identify at least one objective of the Hatch-Multistate project and then describe sub-objectives that are specific to your proposal. That is, your sub-objectives should describe how your specific project will help contribute to achieving the objective(s) of the broader Hatch-Multistate project. [Click here to view an example of a conceptual mapping between a Hatch-Multistate objectives and individual project objectives, courtesy of Anissa Poleatewich.](#)

## **V. Methods and Procedures**

Describe the methods and procedures to be used for each objective. Provide sufficient detail and clarity that a peer scientist in a related (albeit not exactly the same) field is able to evaluate the merit and appropriateness of the methods toward achieving the stated objective. The description should provide in some context the testable hypotheses, experimental design, data generation and/or collection strategies, and methods for analyzing the data.

Additionally, please define all abbreviations and describe any discipline-specific techniques. Please also specify any collaborations and cooperative arrangements that may be involved with the research procedures.

For methods and procedures related to engagement and outreach efforts, please describe the efforts that will be used to cause a change in knowledge, actions, or conditions of the identified target audiences. Efforts include acts or processes that deliver science-based knowledge to people through formal or informal educational programs. Include a description of how these efforts will be evaluated and/or impacts quantified.

## **VI. Execution Strategy**

Develop a conceptual model for planning and evaluating the project over the funding period. The model will help clarify linkages between activities, outcomes, and impacts; communicate rationale for the activities; and provide a framework that helps evaluate performance measures and determine the ultimate success of the work.

The NHAES uses the execution strategy structure developed by the USDA-NIFA, which includes the following components:

- Situation: a description of the challenge or opportunity. The problem or issue to be addressed, within a complex of socio-political, environmental, and economic conditions.
- Inputs: what is invested, such as resources, contributions, and investments that are provided for the program.
- Activities: what the program does with its inputs to services it provides to fulfill its mission.
- Outputs: products, services and events that are intended to lead to the program's outcomes.
- Outcomes/Impacts: planned results or changes for individuals, groups, communities, organizations or systems. Types of outcomes and impacts include:
  - Change in knowledge—when there is a change in knowledge or the participants actually learn.
  - Change in behavior—when there is a change in behavior or the participants act upon what they have learned.
  - Change in condition—when a societal condition is improved.
- External factors: variables that may have an effect on the portfolio, program, or project but which cannot be changed by the managers of the portfolio, program, or project.
- Assumptions: the premises based on theory, research, evaluation knowledge, etc. that support the relationships of the elements of the logic model and upon which the success of the portfolio, program, or project rests.

[Click here to view a sample execution strategy plan provided by the USDA-NIFA.](#)

[Click here to download a template for developing an execution strategy plan for your proposal.](#)

## **VII. Nontechnical Summary and Keywords**

The nontechnical summary should be no more than 100 words and should be framed using three parts:

What is your project's goal and why is it critical?

What are your project objectives (i.e., how will you work toward achieving the goal)

Who are the key audiences of your work and how will your work impact the knowledge, actions, and conditions of those groups?

Please do not use technical terms, abbreviations, and other terms that may not be readily familiar to a non-academic audience.

Lastly, please list 5-7 keywords or key terms that describe your project.

## **VIII. Anticipated Expenditures**

Provide a concise narrative that describes the actual expected costs of carrying out your multi-year research project. Please note that it is unlikely that the NHAES funding amount will be able to fully cover your anticipated expenses. Instead, the budget narrative is intended to provide internal reviewers and USDA reviewers with confidence that you are aware of the total cost of your proposed research and that you are able to reasonably approximate the extent to which NHAES funding is able to fund specific activities (or parts of specific activities). Please see the *Eligibility and Award Information* section above to review the eligible expenses that can be covered by NHAES project funds.

## **IX. Complementary Funding and Anticipated Funding Targets**

Provide a listing of all current and pending grants and contracts that would directly help to support the proposed research.

Additionally, please provide a list of specific programs that you anticipate targeting as a result of conducting this project. This will assist NHAES and UNH Research Development offices to better understand potential leveraging opportunities and potentially provide support for you to pursue those opportunities as a result of your NHAES work.

## **X. Assurance Information**

If your project includes research with human subjects and/or vertebrate animals, you must complete the necessary research compliance protocols through the [UNH Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) and/or the [UNH Institutional Animal Use and Care Committee \(IACUC\)](#). If you've submitted a request but have not yet received a decision, please list the date of your request submission.

Additionally, if you intend to use any of the [NHAES research facilities](#) or will conduct your research at one of the [Woodlands and Natural Areas sites](#), please contact the appropriate facility/site manager to discuss your project and submit either an NHAES Facility Use Request form or the Woodlands and Natural Areas Course, Research, or Activity Registration form. Provide assurance this was completed as part of the proposal process.

## **XI. Literature Cited**

List all citations from all sections of the proposal. Please do not cite literature not referenced in the proposal text. For all citations, follow the format of a major journal in your discipline. However, the choice of format is less important than assuring consistency of format.

## XII. Two-page Curriculum Vitae

Please ensure that to include scholarly and outreach/engagement activities from the past five years only.

### POST-AWARD RESPONSIBILITIES

#### ANNUAL AND FINAL PROGRESS REPORTING

All NHAES project directors are required to submit annual reports (first two years) and a final report (last year) for the project. These reports are used to communicate the research, outreach, and impact progress for your work. This can include but is not limited to peer reviewed publications, graduate and potentially undergraduate student training, presentations to scientific and stakeholder audiences, and documented efforts to leverage these funds with additional external funding to strengthen your efforts and outcomes.

Reports are due 90-days after the end of the fiscal year on September 30 (i.e., November 22 or the next business day). [Please download and read through the NHAES guide for writing effective impact statements.](#)

If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from submitting a report by the due date, please let me know. Repeated instances of late submissions could affect the prioritization of requests for additional NHAES assistantships and/or future NHAES project funding. If reports are not submitted by January 15, your NHAES project funding will be frozen until the report is submitted.

*Why write a detailed annual and final reports?*

Despite the possibly common notion that annual reports go into a "black box" never to be viewed again, every single report from NHAES project directors is reviewed by both the NHAES Director and Communications Manager. These reports serve two critical NHAES objectives:

1. Providing information the NHAES Director for putting together the Station's *Annual Report of Accomplishments* and the Station's *Plan of Work*, both of which are a required component for NHAES to communicate to our federal granting partner, the USDA-NIFA, about how their funds are stewarded for meeting research and outreach/engagement missions. Without a timely, detailed set of reports about each NHAES project, the quality of Station's reports is adversely affected.
2. The NHAES Communications Manager and Director use the information provided by the project directors to develop numerous resources for the upcoming year to

disseminate project directors' accomplishments to a broader audience. For example, the Communications Manager uses the reports to craft news stories about the work that can be widely distributed in popular media. The Director leverages the reports to communicate successes of individual researchers and of the Station as a whole to key stakeholders internal and external to the University. In short, **your reports matter.**

### CONTRIBUTING TO THE NHAES COMMUNICATIONS MISSION

The key role of the NHAES Communications Manager is to help NHAES scientists strengthen the reach and impacts of their research across a wide range of stakeholder communities. This not only increases the Station's ability to meet its outreach and engagement mission, but to also increase scientists' recognition and reputation among both the scientific and stakeholder communities.

To assist the Communications Manager, project directors of active or recently completed NHAES projects are expected to:

- Be responsive to requests from the Communications Manager for information about their NHAES project.
- Using the [UNH-NHAES PowerPoint template](#) when compiling presentations related to NHAES projects.
- Acknowledge NHAES and USDA-NIFA funding support in reports, presentation, publications, and other communication scenarios.
- To the extent possible, be willing to participate in NHAES-facilitated field days and stakeholder interaction events.
- At the conclusion of a project funding period, work with the Communications Manager to compile a 2-3 page NHAES report that communicates the major findings of the project. This will be done in parallel with the submission of the required final report.

### TIMELY EXPENDITURES

Within each federal fiscal year (October 1–September 30), all expenditures must be completed by August 15. If expenditures need to occur between August 15 and September 30, please provide a summary of these expenses to the NHAES director and research project manager. Funds that go unspent or the encumbrances are not communicated by August 15 will not be available and will not roll over to the next fiscal year.

## HATCH AND HATCH-MULTISTATE PROJECT INITIATION AND REPORTING SYSTEM

As of May 2021, the USDA NIFA began using two separate systems for initiating and reporting on AES projects.

Hatch and Hatch-Multistate projects are now managed in the new NIFA Reporting System (NRS) and requires eAuthentication of your email before you can access this system. The guide below provides details about the eAuthentication process and using the new system.

Projects under the McIntire-Stennis and Animal Health programs will continue using the existing [REEport management system](#). If you are a project director for one of these types of projects, you may skip the sections below.

### REGISTERING WITH EAUTHENTICATION

The USDA requires that users of newer reporting systems go through an authentication process to ensure that their email is associated with the correct person. This authentication process is conducted only once, and if you have relatively recently received a competitive USDA grant, you may have already gone through the eAuthentication process.

If you have eAuthenticated your email and know your log-in information, you may skip the remainder of this section.

If you have not completed the eAuthentication process or are unsure of your status, please follow the steps below:

1. [Click here to navigate to the eAuthentication home page](#).
2. Click the *Create Account* menu link, select the "Customer" option on the next page, and then click *Continue*.
3. Enter your email and click *Submit*. Note that for individuals who had an active Hatch project in 2021, the email associated with your Hatch or Hatch-Multistate project was automatically transferred from the old REEport to the new management system. Please use the email associated with your REEport account.
4. You will receive an email from the USDA eAuthentication system. Please use the link in that email to access the remaining steps of the eAuthentication process. Note that if you have already gone through the eAuthentication process, the email you receive will note this and instead of providing a link to the eAuthentication process will contain a link for resetting your password.



## NRS PROJECT INITIATION PROCESS

Once you have completed and received confirmation of the eAuthentication process, you can access the NIFA Reporting System using the following link:

<https://nrs.nifa.usda.gov/>

Log into the NRS using the email and password that you registered with the USDA eAuthentication system. You will be redirected to the NRS Dashboard. Follow these steps to initiate a new NHAES Hatch or Hatch-Multistate project:

1. In the **Projects & Programs** square, click the *+Add* link to initiate a new project. The "Add Project/Program" page will appear.
2. Select either the "Research capacity fund (Hatch)" or "Researching capacity fund (Hatch-Multistate)," depending on your project type. The page should populate with additional fields.
3. Add information to the remaining fields to correspond to the cover sheet and other contents of the project proposal that has been approved by the NHAES director.
4. Once all of the fields have been filled in, click the *Save* button.

### Additional requests:

- In the **Non-technical Summary** field, while it is not asked for, please include a brief summary of the anticipated impacts of your proposed research.
- In the **Methodology** field, while it is not asked for, please include the specific objectives of your project.
- For Hatch-Multistate projects, while it is not asked for, please include the full name of the associated Multistate Project in the **Methodology** field (e.g., *NE9: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources*).
- You will notice that there are many fewer fields in the new initiation and reporting system. That is by design.
- You will notice that there is no longer an option to upload your full proposal. While this capability may return in the future, the NHAES will maintain electronic copies of your proposals and make them publicly available on the NHAES website.