National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NIFA Reporting System Monthly Webinar Recap

Date of Webinar: March 30, 2023, 1:00 p.m. CT/ 2:00 p.m. ET via Zoom

Purpose: Beginning with Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, all capacity projects and programs will be managed in the NIFA Reporting System (NRS). The monthly NRS webinars are intended to inform NRS users of ongoing system modifications and enhancements, communicate critical dates, and gather end user feedback. A recording of this event can be found on www.nifa.usda.gov/nrs-resources.

Agenda
- Annual Report of Accomplishments presentation
- NRS Demo: Submitting the FY 2022 Annual Report in NRS

NRS Updates
- Certain institutions may experience issues when accessing or entering NIMSS data for Hatch Multistate projects. We are actively identifying a solution and will communicate when the issue has been resolved.

Annual Report of Accomplishments Presentation and NRS Demonstration
Olivia Kwong, Program Analyst, presented on the Annual Report of Accomplishments. The presentation provided an overview of the capacity reporting cycle and how each reporting cycle provides a comprehensive view of how states are addressing agricultural challenges. Additionally, a summary of each report component and the NIFA Review process was provided. Brandon Dillion, Business Analyst, provided a demonstration on how to submit the FY 2022 Annual Report in NRS.

Important Note: Once in Organizational Review, all users assigned a Director role in NRS for the contributing institution(s) will be required to sign the Annual Report in order to submit for NIFA Review. Adding or removing signers during the approval flow may disrupt the report workflow. Please ensure Organizational Administrators review users assigned a Director role in NRS within the organization prior to creating the FY 2022 Annual Report.

The Office of Planning, Accountability, and Reporting Staff (PARS) will host optional NRS Office Hours to provide support for the FY 2022 Annual Report of Accomplishments on Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 1:00pm – 2:00pm CT / 2:00pm – 3:00pm ET. Please enter the meeting at any point during the hour to receive assistance. If you are unable to attend the optional Office Hours, but need additional Annual Report support, please contact the NRS Help Desk at nrs@usda.gov.

Register in advance to attend the Annual Report Office Hours:
https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_G7ruJi60ToimfDJlmdipEA

Research and Extension Working Group Update
The Research and Extension working group met on March 20, 2023 for a demo of the design for project/program closeout functions. Feedback on closeout design options, role management, and NRS permissions were received during the meeting. The group is scheduled to reconvene this summer.

Organization Point of Contact(s)
The March 16, 2023 release enhanced the Organizations page to include a section for Point(s) of Contact (POC). Organizational Administrators will have the ability to assign users as a POC. By adding a POC for your institution, communications between LGUs and NIFA will be streamlined. PARS requests POC assignments be completed no later than May 1, 2023 to assist with report correspondence. Please contact the NRS Help Desk at nrs@usda.gov with any questions.

NRS Resources Update
NRS Resources has now been updated to include upcoming the tentative monthly webinar dates. Please note future webinar dates are included for planning purposes only and are subject to change based on the deployment of system enhancements and speaker availability. Visit www.nifa.usda.gov/nrs-resources to view the tentative 2023 monthly webinar dates.

IMPORTANT DATES

April 6, 2023 – NRS Office Hours – Annual Report of Accomplishments
April 20, 2023 – Monthly NRS Webinar
May 1, 2023 – Point of Contact Information due in NRS
May 1, 2023 – FY 2022 Annual Report of Accomplishments due in NRS
May 11, 2023 – NRS Office Hours – Plan of Work
May 18, 2023 – Monthly NRS Webinar
June 1, 2023 – FY 2024 Plan of Work due in NRS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL ANNUAL REPORT QUESTIONS

What is the deadline to submit the FY 2022 Annual Report of Accomplishments?
The deadline to submit the FY2022 Annual Report of Accomplishments in NRS is May 1, 2023. Please note that delays in the submission of your Annual Report as required may result in your institution's 4th quarter FY 2023 funds being withheld by NIFA's Awards Management Division.

What is the reporting period for the FY 2022 Annual Report?
The FY 2022 Annual Report will cover activities occurring between October 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022.

NRS ANNUAL REPORT QUESTIONS

Which NRS roles can manage the Annual Report?
- **Directors** can create, edit, submit for Organizational Review, submit to NIFA Review, and retract the Annual Report.
- **State Contributors** can create, edit, submit for Organizational Review, and retract the Annual Report. State Contributors cannot submit the Annual Report to NIFA Review.
- **All NRS roles** can view and print an approved Annual Report.

Will joint reporting information pre-populate in the Annual Report?
States that jointly report will have the participating institutions' information pre-populated in the Contributing Organization(s) field. Each state should verify users assigned a Director role in NRS prior to beginning the Annual Report. Users assigned a Director role will be required to sign the Annual Report for each contributing organization.

How do I delete a draft Annual Report?
An Annual Report cannot be deleted. Users are encouraged to make the necessary edits to the report from draft status. The Annual Report can be returned to draft status at any point prior to NIFA Approval by a Director or State Contributor.

I do not see my FY 2021 Annual Report in NRS. What should I do?
FY 2021 Annual Reports should be available under the Annual Report menu. If you, nor any member of your contributing organization(s) are able to view the FY 2021 Annual Report, please email the NRS Help Desk at nrs@usda.gov.

How can I ensure my Annual Report draft is being saved as I proceed through each section?
NRS autosaves text entered in fields on the Executive Summary, Merit Scientific Peer Review Processes, and Stakeholder Input Annual Report pages. NRS will display timestamp, "Saved at [HH:MM]" in green below each textbox after text is entered. The autosave may take up to two seconds to occur. Please verify the text was saved by ensuring the timestamp is displayed prior to progressing through the report.

Who is required to sign the Annual Report?
All users assigned a Director role within the institution(s) will be required to sign the Annual Report. Please verify all Directors prior to creating the Annual Report. Editing Directors during the Annual Report

approval flow may create report issues.

Can I change or add a signer once the FY 2022 Annual Report is no longer in Draft status?
Editing Directors during the Annual Report approval flow may create report issues. To edit signers, return the report to draft status and request role changes from your Organizational Administrator.

What can I expect after submitting the Annual Report to NIFA for Review?
NIFA Review will be completed within two (2) months following the May 1st Annual Report submission deadline. The initial review is performed by the National Program Leader (NPL) assigned as the AREERA state liaison and a secondary review is performed by the NPL's Division Director.

What are the Annual Report outcomes of NIFA Review?
NIFA Review may result in an Approved or Deferred Annual Report.
- **Approved**: The Annual Report covers what is required and the NIFA reviewer provides comments in NRS including any feedback for sections done well or suggested improvements for future Annual Reports
- **Deferred**: The reviewer is requesting that the Annual Report be revised and the NIFA reviewer will provide comments in NRS on what needs to be edited before resubmitting. Deferrals will have one week to revise and resubmit their AR.
    - One of the more common reasons for deferral is when an Annual Report does not cover both research and extension. Please remember to cover both types of funding.

Following approval, where will Annual Reports be posted for public viewing?
Annual Reports of Accomplishments will be available on USDA's Research, Education, and Economics Information System (REEIS) website, https://reeis.usda.gov/. PARS will notify grantees when the reports have been posted. The public version of the report does not feature NIFA comments.

Which comments will display on the final Annual Report?
NRS is currently being enhanced to display comments from the NPLs on the approved Annual Report. Users will be notified when this feature has been released.

ANNUAL REPORT CONTENT QUESTIONS

I need to edit/assign a critical issue to an existing project/program. Will this require project/program reapproval from NIFA?
Edits to projects and programs, including critical issue associations, should be completed prior to submitting the Annual Report. An edit to the critical issue will require project/program reapproval from NIFA.

Can I add a Result directly to the Annual Report?
Yes, Results for a project or program can be directly added to an Annual Report that is in Draft status. Results added to the Annual Report draft will replicate in all other areas where Results display in NRS. Note: Draft Results and Results in Organizational Review will not display on the Annual Report.

Can I highlight a Result from the Annual Report?
Yes, Results can be highlighted directly from the Annual Report by selecting the star beside the Result you would like to highlight. A highlighted Result will display a solid blue star.

Will Results marked as "Nothing Significant to Report" display on the approved Annual Report?
Yes, Results in Organizational Review, NIFA Review and Approved status will display in the Annual Report. This includes Results marked as "Nothing Significant to Report".

Do you have examples of well written Annual Reports?
All FY 2020 Annual Reports are currently available on REEIS. Additionally, each institution's FY 2021 Annual Report is available in NRS within the Annual Report module. When viewing your FY 2021 Annual Report, it may be helpful to search "report status" to review the feedback provided from NIFA to consider while drafting your FY 2022 Annual Report.