

## NIFA Reporting System Monthly Webinar Recap

**Date of Webinar:** January 25, 2024, 1:00 p.m. CT/ 2:00 p.m. ET via Zoom

**Purpose:** All capacity projects and programs are 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](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nrs-resources).

### Agenda

- NRS Updates
- Annual and Final Results for Research Projects and Extension Programs
- NRS Demonstration: Adding and Managing Results

### NRS Updates

#### Financial Reporting Update

The due date for the FY 2023 Financial Report for capacity funds has been postponed due to an external delay with the required clearance for data collection. To assist with planning and data collection ahead of the NRS Financial Module release and announcement of the new due date, PARS provided **FY2023 Preliminary Financial Report Guidance** on 12/14/2023 via the listserv. This document is intended to provide information on financial reporting of capacity grant research projects and Extension programs as the module continues to be developed. Additionally, the supplemental guide **Changes to Financial Reporting Fields in NRS** was emailed on 01/17/2024. This document provides a crosswalk of the financial reporting fields to further assist with planning and data collection ahead of the NRS Financial Module release. If you did not receive this information, please contact the NRS Help Desk at [nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov).

Once development is completed and clearance is obtained, the FY 2023 Financial Report for capacity funds and OGFMS Supplemental Form will be available in NRS. The NRS financial module will not be utilized for other financial reporting such as competitive financial reports, SF425, etc. **The due dates for the FY 2023 Financial Report for capacity funds and OGFMS Supplemental Form have not been determined at this time.** We will announce the due date as soon as we have received clearance to proceed with data collection from the Office of Management and Budget. At a minimum, partners will receive a 60-day notice to prepare their financial reporting.

We encourage our LGU partners to review the preliminary guidance and supplemental document provided with the appropriate staff ahead of the release of the NRS financial module. A due date for the FY 2023 Financial Report for capacity funds has not been determined at this time, however partners will receive a 60-day notice of the deadline. Upon announcement of the deadline, we will host an NRS webinar to provide additional guidance on the financial reports, demonstrate how to complete the report in NRS, and host NRS Office Hours. To review additional capacity reporting submission deadlines, visit [www.nifa.usda.gov/nrs](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nrs). For questions or concerns, please contact the NRS Help Desk at [nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov).

#### Financial Report Planning

Prior to the announcement of the due date, you should:

1. Review the [October 2023 Financial Module webinar](#) and [webinar recap](#) which showed the NRS Financial Module design and fields.
2. Assign Financial Administrators. Only Financial Administrators will be able to edit information in the Financial Module. Organizational Administrators can add Financial Administrator permissions to the NRS profiles of users that will participate in financial reporting. Financial Administrators will not have the ability to view the NRS Financial Module until it is released.

- **To add the Financial Administrator permission to an existing user**, select the Financial Administrator button within the individual user's NRS profile from the User Management module.
    - Note: Organizational Administrators should assign the View Only role with the Financial Administrator permission for users who should only have the ability to edit and submit financial reports within the Financial Module which limits the ability to make actions in Projects/Programs, Annual Report, etc.
  - **To add the Financial Administrator permission to a new user**, the user must first follow the steps provided in the new [NIFA Reporting System Registration Guide](#) to obtain an account. Email the NRS Help Desk at [nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov) for assistance if needed. The Organizational Administrator may then add the new user from the User Management module. Financial Administrator permissions can be added to any NRS role.
3. Determine who will enter the information in the fields and sign the report. The report will only require one signature to submit to NIFA, however multiple Financial Administrators may sign the report. If multiple Financial Administrators will be asked to sign, ensure that you coordinate who will submit to NIFA after those signatures are completed.
  4. Export your active Projects and Programs from FY 2023 to review your list, paying close attention to start and end dates. Active Projects/Programs will have an Approval Date in the export. To export, navigate to the Projects and Programs module and click 'Export All' from the overview page. All FY 2023 Projects and Programs that have been approved by NIFA will display on the FY 2023 Financial Report. As with prior years, the accessions will be listed in each row and funding sources listed in columns.
  5. Begin data collection. The written guidance outlines all information requested for every field. Please do not wait until Financial Module is released to begin collecting this information. Once the NRS Financial Module is live, data entry can begin immediately.

## Research and Extension Results

FY 2023 Research and Extension Results for capacity funding are due in NRS on **March 1, 2024**. During this presentation, an overview of Annual and Final Results was provided. Results must be entered for every project or program active in FY 2023. Following submission, Results are reviewed for approval or deferral by NIFA. As a reminder, starting 60 days before the end date Projects/Programs will have closeout task lists and the ability to add a Final Result will become available. Please complete submission of the Final Result last, after all Annual Results are added. Once the end date has passed the Project/Program status will change to CLOSED and you will no longer be able to edit any information.

Results summarize the issues or problems the project/program addresses, describe major activities, and detail the progress toward goals and the benefits of the project/program. All submitted Annual and Final Results will appear in the FY 2023 Annual Report of Accomplishments for schools with AREERA funding. Within the report, Results that significantly exemplify the work being done to address critical agricultural issues can be highlighted by selecting the blue star beside the Result.

To add a Result, users should select the Results tab from the Projects & Programs menu, then select the project/program to input the Result details. It is advised to complete the Result questions (below) in a word document then copy and paste the responses into NRS. The Results fields allow maximum amount of 10,000 characters. Additional instructions on adding Results in NRS are included in the presentation. The fields for Annual and Final Results are identical and are as follows:

1. In 2-3 sentences, briefly describe the issue or problem that your project addresses.
2. Briefly describe in non-technical terms how your major activities helped you achieve, or make significant progress toward, the goals and objectives described in your non-technical summary.
3. Briefly describe how your target audience benefited from your project's activities.
4. Briefly describe how the broader public benefited from your project's activities.
5. Comments (optional unless 'No Significant Results' is selected)

Final Results should also include a summary of equipment purchased with any federal funds under the award and indicate subsequent use of such equipment within the Comments field. Identification of the equipment should include a brief description or name and if available, the manufacturer's serial number, model number, Federal

stock number, national stock number, or other identification number. See the examples of equipment summaries below:

- Autoclave Sterilizer (Tuttnauer 2340EP) was used to train students in lab work procedures and to support Animal Science lab work.
- An infrared spectrophotometer (ThermoScientific Nicolet iS20 FTIR) was purchased for the identification of organic compounds.

**2024 Capacity Reporting Deadlines**

The 2024 reporting deadlines have been published on the [NRS website](#). All capacity reports will be submitted in NRS. See key information for each report below.

REPORT	REPORTING PERIOD	DETAILS	DEADLINE
<b>Financial Reports</b>	FY 2023	Reporting on funds utilized for research and Extension activities during the prior fiscal year. FY 2023 Financial Reports should be submitted within the NRS Financial Module.	<b>POSTPONED</b>
<b>Research Results and Extension Results</b>	FY 2023	The submission of Results for individual research projects and Extension programs active at any time during the reporting fiscal year (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023). All Extension programs and research projects will submit Annual or Final Results at this time. If the project/program end date was within the reporting fiscal year a Final Result is required FY 2023 Annual and Final Results should be submitted within the NRS Projects and Programs Module.	March 1, 2024
<b>Annual Report of Accomplishments</b>	FY 2023	A full report which highlights the most significant achievements, impacts, and outcomes of research projects and Extension programs for a state or institution in the prior fiscal year. (Applies to AREERA funding only.)	May 1, 2024
<b>Plan of Work (POW)</b>	FY 2025	The planned activities expected to occur during the upcoming fiscal year with the use of capacity funds administered by NIFA. (Applies to AREERA funding only.)	June 1, 2024*
<b>OGFM Supplemental Form</b>	FY 2023	This requirement applies only to 1862 Land-Grant Universities that are required to expend a specified percentage of Hatch Act and Smith-Lever Act grant funds on multistate Extension and integrated research and Extension activities. The FY 2023 Combined Research and Extension OGFM Multi-State and Integrated Activity Supplemental Forms will be available within the NRS Financial Module.	TBD

*\*In the event a reporting deadline occurs on a non-business day or federal holiday, the due date shall be extended to the following business day.*

**IMPORTANT DATES**

March 29, 2024 – NRS Webinar  
 April 7-10, 2024 – NERAOC 2024 Conference (Wilmington, DE)

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Q: Does the information included in the Final Result cover the entirety of the Project/Program, or only the final fiscal year?**

A: The Final Result should summarize the results achieved over the course of the Project/Program and explain the significance of those results. It is not necessary to re-enter all information from prior year Results. In addition to supplying the information required in [NIFA Capacity Award Terms and Conditions](#), Annual and Final Results Reporting of Section VI.100, the Final Result must include the following in the Comment field when applicable: identify equipment purchased with any federal funds under the award and indicate subsequent use of such equipment. The comment field may also be used to report publications and other product produced during the last fiscal year, if applicable.

### **Q: What is considered equipment and how do I report on it in the Final Result?**

A: "Equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than 1 year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000." (page 90 of the [NIFA Policy Guide](#)).

For Final Results, a summary of equipment purchased with any federal funds under the award and subsequent use of such equipment should be reported within the Comments field. Identification of the equipment should include a brief description or name and if available, the manufacturer's serial number, model number, Federal stock number, national stock number, or other identification number. See the examples of equipment summaries below:

- Autoclave Sterilizer (Tuttnauer 2340EP) was used to train students in lab work procedures and to support Animal Science lab work.
- An infrared spectrophotometer (ThermoScientific Nicolet iS20 FTIR) was purchased for the identification of organic compounds.

### **Q: I don't see the "closing out flag." Where is it?**

A: A closing out flag is displayed for Projects and Programs starting 60 days before the end date. The flag is visible in several NRS locations including above the title of the accession on the Projects & Programs page, as well as in the Open Tasks list when viewing those Project/Program details. The flag will remain until the closing out tasks are completed and the end date is realized.

### **Q: My project closed without entering a FY 2023 Annual Result. What happened?**

A: Be sure to enter all Results prior to entering the Final Result. If the end date is has passed, Projects/Programs will close once the Final Result is sent to NIFA Review. If you need to re-open a Project/Program, you can email the NRS help desk ([nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov)).

### **Q: Can I manage Results from the Annual Report?**

A: Yes. Results can be managed and highlighted from the Project/Program details, Results overview tab or within the Annual Report (applies to institutions with AREERA funding only). You cannot make edits to the Project/Program from the Annual Report.

### **Q: My Result was Deferred, what does this mean?**

A: NIFA has reviewed your Result and determined there are corrections needed. You should receive an email with the details from the National Program Leader. If you do not receive this information, contact [nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov).

### **Q: My Project Director/Project Initiator left. Do I still need to do a Result?**

A: Yes. All approved Projects/Programs require an Annual/Final Result. For this situation, it is appropriate to enter a Final Result of "Nothing Significant to Report" and note the PD/PI left in the comments. If the PD/PI left before the end of the Project/Program and will not be replaced, please remember to edit the Project/Program to update the end date.

**Q: We transitioned to new critical issues recently, but I noticed that many/most of our closed projects don't have a listed critical issue. Some of these we would like to use in our institutional report. However, we can no longer update the critical issue for these closed projects. What should we do?**

A: If you need to re-open a Project/Program to add a Critical Issue, please email the NRS help desk ([nrs@usda.gov](mailto:nrs@usda.gov)) for assistance.

**Q: Does NRS notify users via email when changes are made to Results?**

A: No. Results do not have notifications. Directors, State Contributors and Organizational Administrators will receive a system generated email notification when the AREERA Annual Report and Plan of Work is submitted for Organizational Review, NIFA Review, Approved or Deferred. Additionally, Directors, State Contributors, and Organizational Administrators will receive an email notification when Research Projects and Extension Programs are submitted for Organizational Review, NIFA Review, Approved, Declined or Deferred. You can use the Results tab from the Projects & Programs menu to search for Results in specific statuses to find Org Review Results waiting for submission or Deferred Results waiting for revision.

**Q: Who can highlight Results?**

A: Directors and State Contributors can highlight Results.

**Q: Can we filter by Department in NRS?**

A: We do not have a filter in NRS for Performing Department but will take that into consideration for a future enhancement for NRS, however Performing Department is included in the Projects and Programs export.

**Q: Are State Contributors no longer allowed to perform Org Review and submit to NIFA for Review for Results?**

A: State Contributors can submit to Org Review and NIFA Review for Results.

**Q: Will there be a webinar for Financial Module once released?**

A: Yes. Upon announcement of the deadline, we will host an NRS webinar to provide additional guidance on the financial reports, demonstrate how to enter the report in NRS, and host NRS Office Hours. In the interim, please review the FY2023 Preliminary Guidance, Changes to Financial Reporting in NRS supplemental document, and the [October 2023 NRS Webinar Recap](#) which features additional Financial Reporting information.