

### Prospectus Development (2 months)

A prospectus serves as an expedited communication tool between all levels of the ARS to establish each project's objectives and approaches to meet plan objectives. The prospectus is used by OSQR to identify the expertise needed in peer reviewers. Immediately after obtaining approved prospectuses, panel chairs and OSQR begin retaining reviewers. As guided by National Program Leaders, a prospectus states objectives, need for research, approach and procedures, collaborations, and conflicts of interests.

### Project Plan (4 months)

The project plan is the research document that describes in detail the proposed research project outlined in the prospectus. The plan must be written and approved, peer reviewed, revised, and finally implemented. The project plan details the objectives; the need for research; the scientific background of the problems being addressed; the experimental plan; and the project's milestones and expected outcomes. Each plan concludes with a short statement of past accomplishments of each investigator and a statement concerning health, safety, and other issues of concern. National Program Leaders and Area Offices are encouraged to share examples of well written project plans with research teams early in the Peer Review Process. (See Exhibit 8: ARS Research Project Plan Format.) Prior to sending project plans to peer reviewers, OSQR ensures that each plan is approved by the Laboratory/Center/Institute, National Program Team, and Area Director.

**Comments  
for Section 5  
Prospectus and Project Plan**