



Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management

Fiscal 2004

Competitive Award Program: Description and Application Process



Checklist

All proposals submitted under the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM) must contain the applicable elements described in this brochure. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the proposal is complete and in the proper order prior to mailing:

- ✓ Application for Funding Cover Page
 - Is all required information accurate and complete?
 - Has the Principal Investigator and the authorized organizational representative signed the Cover Page?
 - Does one copy contain pen-and-ink signatures?
 - Have you included a telephone number, fax number, and/or e-mail address where a message may be left for you?
 - ✓ Table of Contents
 - Are page numbers included for each item?
 - ✓ Project Summary
 - Has the Project Summary been included?
 - Do the name and institution of the Principal Investigator and co-investigators appear on the page, or on the following page?
 - Does it include research objectives?
 - Is it no more than 250 words?
 - ✓ Project Description
 - Is the project fully described?
 - Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations, as specified?
 - Does this section begin as page 1, as specified?
 - Does it contain a tentative schedule or workplan of major steps of study?
 - ✓ Citations to Project Description
 - Are all references cited?
 - Are all citations referenced?
 - Do all citations contain a title and are they in accepted journal format?
 - ✓ Documentation from Collaborator(s), or Host Institution (where appropriate)
 - ✓ Vitae and Publications List(s)
 - Are vitae included for the Principal Investigator and co-investigators, senior associates, and other key project personnel (including subcontractors—see instructions)?
 - Are the vitae current and pertinent?
 - Are the publications lists complete and limited to the last 5 years?
 - ✓ Budget (form ARS-455)
 - Are budget items complete?
 - Is the summary budget included?
 - Is the funding level total in line N within the stated limit of \$250,000 for the 3-year duration of the project proposal?
 - Is the budget duration within the stated limit of 3 years?
 - ✓ Indirect Cost Rate Schedule
 - For reimbursement of indirect costs, is a copy included of the applicant's indirect cost rate schedule that reports the applicant's federally negotiated audited rate?
 - ✓ General
 - Does the proposal conform to all format and page limitations and deadline requirements?
 - Are there an original and 12 copies?
 - Are all copies complete?
-

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Overview

Applications are invited for competitive awards from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for fiscal 2004. This document provides background on the research areas of interest to the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM), application procedures, deadlines for submission, and guidance for the application process.

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) anticipates awarding approximately \$1.2 million in fiscal 2004 for competitive awards. ERS will accept proposals under this program for funding levels, inclusive of indirect cost when applicable, between \$50,000 and \$250,000 (for the duration of the competitive award, not to exceed 3 years).

Authority

The authority for this program is contained in the Omnibus Budget Appropriations Act, Fiscal 2004 (P.L. 108-7). Proposals may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal, State, or county agencies, private organization, corporation, or individual.

Applicable Federal Statutes, Regulations, and Guidelines

Applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and guidelines include the following:

(a) guidelines to be followed when submitting proposals and rules governing the evaluation of proposals; (b) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations, 7 CFR 3019; (c) the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR Part 3015; (d) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR Part 3016; and (e) Cooperative Research Agreement 7 USC 3318b.

Priority Research Areas

ERS is accepting economic research proposals in three broad research areas of importance to USDA's invasive species policies and programs. The ERS program focuses on national decisionmaking concerning invasive species of agricultural significance or affecting or affected by USDA programs. The term "invasive species" is applied broadly to include any vertebrate, invertebrate, weed, fungi, plant disease, livestock disease, or other organism that:

- Is non-native, alien, or exotic to the ecosystem where it exists or potentially could be introduced—including agricultural, range, and forest ecosystems; and
- When introduced, causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm.

Proposals should focus on economic research, and/or decision support system development that has direct implications for USDA policies and programs for protection from, control/management of, regulation concerning, or trade policy relating to invasive species. Anticipated, competitive funding in fiscal 2004 will be approximately \$1.2 million.

The three Priority Research Areas listed below highlight economic research priorities identified by ERS, in consultation with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), USDA's Forest Service, and other USDA agencies and offices with programs related to invasive species, as appropriate for competitive funding. ERS is especially interested in proposals for research with expected outcomes that include immediately useful, analytically based principles or guidelines for invasive species policy/program decision-making, decision support tools, and economic information, database, or modeling systems that support the use of such principles, guidelines, or tools. The suggested topics and questions discussed below within each Priority Research Area are not meant to be exhaustive. Applicants may propose other topics within any of the Priority Research Areas, but they must provide persuasive justification for those topics in their proposals.

Applicants may address multiple issues, but must specify one of the three priority research areas below:

I. Stakeholders and Incentives for Efficient Invasive Species Program Management

- A. Collective Action and Property Rights
- B. The Economics of Contraband
- C. Moral Hazard in Public and Private Sector Interaction on Invasive Species Management

II. Practical Decision Tools for Invasive Species Management

- A. Developing multi-criteria decisionmaking tools
- B. Applying standard tools and techniques of economic analysis to the design and implementation of invasive pest programs and policies
- C. Valuing ecological services likely to be affected by invasive agricultural pests of forest, range, and agricultural ecosystems

III. Trade and Invasive Species

- A. Economic evaluation of national invasive species regulations on trade in international agricultural markets
- B. Economic analysis of international rules and governance framework for invasive species regulations
- C. Trade-related invasive species risks, regulations, and responses: firm-level analyses

I. Stakeholders and Incentives for Efficient Invasive Species Program Management

Actions taken by the public sector to prevent or manage invasive species affect and/or rely upon the cooperation of commodity industries, traders, natural resource and conservation interest groups, and private individuals whose property contributes to the dispersal or establishment of an invasive species. Exploring in an objective and systematic manner who the stakeholders and other actors are in invasive species regulation, how they relate to one another and the public sector, what motivates each to act (or fail to act) in particular ways, and what incentives might encourage behavior that enhances program effectiveness could be enormously helpful in crafting long-term strategies for more efficient regulation. In addition to some general investigations of the political economy and welfare implications of invasive species regulation, we would especially welcome research addressing the following issues.

A. Collective Action and Property Rights

Private actions can profoundly influence the effectiveness of public programs. Citrus canker, for example, infects citrus trees on private residences in the same manner that it infects commercial citrus groves. The rights of private property owners can, therefore, conflict with government aims for pest eradication. Conversely, the personal preferences of individuals might make them volunteer allies in government pest detection programs, if those individuals perceive a personal advantage in their contribution to a public good. How can private efforts be corralled for the public good? How well do alternative incentives schemes perform in assuring that private behavior and government means and ends are consistent in achieving collective action?

B. The Economics of Contraband

Increasingly, the distribution and impacts of invasive pests are affected by the actions of individuals outside of commercial sectors. For example, a recent outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease (a serious avian disease) was traced to surreptitious importation of birds from Mexico for the purpose of cockfighting competition. Contraband is a source of potential invasive species problems, made more serious and less easy to track as individuals are able to purchase banned materials over the internet. What do studies comparing the economics of contraband in other sectors with invasive species contraband have to offer for greater understanding and practical direction in how to reduce invasive species threats originating from contraband?

C. Moral Hazard in Public and Private Sector Interaction on Invasive Species Management

Close collaboration between industries affected by a detected invasive species, and the public agency responsible for containing and eliminating the detected species, can be an absolute requirement for effective management of a potential outbreak. But public and private objectives may not always be perfectly aligned. Moral hazard can be a problem if, for instance, payments made to compensate producers who must destroy assets or products rival returns that could be achieved in the marketplace. Another generic example arises when one segment of a national industry (say that producing for the domestic market only) has incentives to undermine Federal efforts to protect the entire industry (including trade-oriented producers) from a common invasive pest that does more harm in one subsector than the other. Under what economic conditions is public-private coordinated action toward common goals most likely? In those economic conditions under which the private sector might have incentives to act in ways that counter public efforts, what might be done by public agents to recognize, if not counteract, such incentives?

II. Practical Decision Tools for Invasive Species Management

Economists possess a wide array of tools and techniques to assemble, process, and analyze data. ERS encourages research that adapts and applies these tools and techniques to aid, guide, and inform USDA decisions and actions related to invasive species prioritization, detection, monitoring, management, and regulation.

A. Developing Multi-Criteria Decisionmaking Tools

USDA decisions and actions on invasive species related economic and environmental problems affect crop and livestock producers, consumers of food and fiber products, and other groups in society. USDA decisions must often balance differences in economic interests among these groups as well as balance conflicts that can arise from simultaneously pursuing the broader goals of stabilizing commodity prices, supporting farm income, protecting the food supply, and protecting the environment. Additionally, as the manager of 191 million acres of public lands, USDA decisions regarding invasive species may have to balance conflicting interests relating to multiple uses and multiple users of these lands.

Given this mix of problems, interests, and goals, decisions about the allocation of scarce resources for research, detection and monitoring, and eradication across invasive, and potentially invasive, species must often be viewed in the context of multi-criteria decision problems. For each of numerous potential invasive species problems, decisionmakers have a range of alternative actions. In turn, each action has an associated cost and an associated set of economic implications for multiple stakeholders. In addition, decisions about the allocation of invasive species program resources may have to be made rapidly, as when responding to a new detection or new information on a species or its pathways. The combination of multiple criteria and the need for quickness suggests that decisionmaking could benefit greatly from having a stock of flexible, readily available decision support tools that could aid in balancing multiple decision criteria in a consistent and transparent manner. ERS thus seeks to fund projects that would apply existing or new multi-criteria decision techniques to develop practical decision support tools for invasive species program management issues such as ranking pests, prioritizing locations for detection or other program focus, or allocating resources among complementary programmatic approaches.

B. Applying Standard Tools and Techniques of Economic Analysis to the Design and Implementation of Invasive Pest Programs and Policies

Environmental conditions, human activity, and biological characteristics interact to provide a variety of pathways by which invasive species can disperse over space and time. The spatial and temporal dimensions of invasive species dispersions means that the economic and environmental impacts associated with their dispersion will also have spatial and temporal dimensions. This suggests that the tools of spatial economics could help to highlight general patterns and trends in invasive species dispersions as well as provide insights on how to manage outbreaks—for example, developing "rule of thumb" economic thresholds that might signal a need to alter response strategies. Other research topics that might be suitable to the traditional tools of economic analysis and that might yield general insights or have broad implications for USDA invasive species policy include—but are not limited to—accounting for risk and uncertainty in prioritizing invasive species threats, understanding the relationship between invasive species and agricultural land values, and developing criteria to help guide the choice of discount rate in assessing and responding to pest threats.

At a more basic level, a large quantity of data have been collected that could help inform USDA invasive species policy, program, and regulatory decisions, if it were available in forms and locations that could be easily accessed and analyzed. International trade data on

commodity flows and seizures by port of entry, country of origin, and pest species could help target border control resources as well as reveal trends or changes in patterns of invasive species entries. Data on domestic crop and livestock movements, location of processing facilities, and transportation infrastructure could improve our ability to assess the potential speed and extent to which crop or livestock disease outbreaks may spread, as well as point out where in the production and marketing system responses would be most effective. A database describing key variables of past invasive pest programs such as expenditures, activities, and outcomes could help USDA policymakers extract and apply lessons from past control programs in responding to new invasive pest threats. ERS encourages activities aimed at improving access, retrieval, and processing of existing time series and cross section data in ways that inform and enhance the decision processes for USDA invasive species programs, policies, and regulatory actions.

ERS is particularly interested in supporting research that expands USDA's ability to apply GIS tools and techniques to the decision processes for prioritizing and responding to invasive species issues. Priority topics include data platforms that spatially link information on transmission vectors, infrastructure, and economic activity, and, improving the ability of economic models in GIS frameworks to endogenize the responses of economic variables to changes in environmental, biological, regulatory, and program conditions related to invasive pest outbreaks and infestations.

C. Valuing Ecological Services Likely to be Affected by Invasive Agricultural Pests of Forest, Range, and Agricultural Ecosystems

In addition to their negative impacts on crop and livestock production, invasive agricultural pests can also diminish the quantity and/or quality of environmental goods and services associated with both public and private lands. This is particularly true where pests have the ability to establish themselves in forest, range, or wetland systems that are in close proximity to agricultural lands or where pests have suitable hosts in both domestic and wild populations. On pasture and rangelands, for example, invasive weeds not only reduce the supply of forage available for livestock but also diminish the quantity and quality of food and habitat available for wild species.

While it is generally understood that ecological services such as clean water, healthy wildlife populations, biodiversity, pollination, and recreation opportunities have value, these values are often not readily observed in market transactions. The nonmarket nature of ecological services can make them difficult to value and thus difficult to weight in decisions regarding the allocation of invasive pest resources. Research is encouraged that would help USDA systematically account for the typical sort of invasive species' impacts on the ecological services of natural systems (particularly forest and range systems) that would be encountered in making USDA invasive species policy or program decisions.

III. Trade and Invasive Species

Trade in agricultural products has increased substantially over the past decades as a result of worldwide demographic trends, economic growth, technological advances in transport, and changes in government trade policies. Countries engage in mutually advantageous trade to enable them to use their limited productive resources more efficiently and therefore achieve a higher real national income than they could without trade. However, increased product trade may also increase the risk of introducing invasive species that can reduce or offset the gains from trade. The WTO, NAFTA, and other trade agreements negotiated by countries have therefore recognized the legitimate need for countries to adopt sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, while establishing a framework to reduce their trade-distorting aspects. One objective of the framework for SPS measures is to dissuade countries from using them for protectionist purposes, primarily through requirements to use science as a basis for risk management policies. The framework also encourages countries to pursue pro-active strategies for increasing trade, such as adopting international standards and providing technical assistance.

A. Economic Evaluation of National Invasive Species Regulations on Trade in International Agricultural Markets

We are interested in the development of analytical platforms for evaluation of the economic impacts of alternative invasive species (IS) regulations on producers and consumers, given existing trade policies. National IS regulations may change for a number of reasons. If protection of environmental amenities is a function of income, countries may want to adopt more restrictive IS regulations as their economies grow. Countries may also choose to adopt more restrictive import protocols as a means of gaining or maintaining access to the markets of other countries. The need for tighter controls that affect trade could be signaled by disease or pest outbreaks. Diffusion of best regulatory practices through the international standards organizations may enable importing countries to design IS regulations that target hazards more precisely, thereby enabling more trade. New technologies for IS control and eradication or loss of a technology (e.g., canceled pesticide registration) could trigger changes in trade opportunities. We seek research that enables the full economic evaluation of the direct and indirect effects of IS regulations, including the costs of reduced trade and the benefits of IS prevention or mitigation. We encourage research that can evaluate such effects in global, as well as national, markets. How might policy choices in other countries affect the imports, exports, or optimal IS policies in the home country? How might arbitrage opportunities in international commodity markets affect estimates of the costs and benefits of IS regulations?

B. Economic Analysis of International Rules and Governance Framework for Invasive Species Regulations

The WTO, NAFTA, and other trade agreements set out rules that govern the interface of trade and SPS regulations, including IS regulations. These rules rest on two premises: that basing domestic regulations on international norms will reduce conflicts and lower transaction costs to trade, and that requiring scientific justification for standards that deviate from these international norms increases the difficulty of using regulations as disguised restrictions on trade. To implement these agreements, the international community relies in part on standards-setting organizations, including the Organization of International Epizootics (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and also draws on the expertise of other international scientific bodies. These agreements and institutions comprise the international governance framework for invasive species regulations. Government initiatives to further implementation of the principles and rules within this framework should be informed by economic analysis that examines their costs and benefits from national and

global perspectives. More specifically, we seek to fund research that addresses the following questions.

Adoption of international standards as a means to harmonize SPS regulations is urged (but not required) by U.S. trade agreements. Since these trade agreements came into effect, a number of initiatives have been proposed by countries in different international forums to further the use of international standards. Yet, the normative basis for endorsement of the harmonization of invasive species and other regulations has not been closely examined. The international support for harmonization stems from repeated complaints by exporters that complying with divergent SPS measures substantially increased the transaction costs of trade. Harmonization can increase economic welfare if the resulting gains from trade outweigh the net benefits of existing regulations. This outcome is more likely if the origins of regulatory heterogeneity are the result of chance events, information differences, or interest group capture. However, harmonization may be inefficient if incomes, tastes, and risks are the primary sources of variation in national regulations. In these instances, other forms of regulatory rapprochement are likely to be more appropriate. Recognition of the equivalence of a trading partner's regulations, for example, provides an alternative to harmonization that could allow countries to allocate scarce resources efficiently rather than identically. ERS is therefore interested in conceptual, theoretical and empirical research that improves understanding of the circumstances under which these regulatory options are likely to increase welfare. We encourage research that explicitly considers the public sector costs of implementation and conformity assessment.

A second issue related to international standards is related to their provision. The character of international standards as an international public good leads to an expectation of underinvestment in their creation. This expectation may lead not only to too few international standards in instances where they are appropriate, but also to too many outmoded standards, which may account in part for the low adoption rate for those standards that do exist. We would therefore be interested in funding research that could provide guidance for identifying priorities for the creation of OIE or IPPC standards that benefit U.S. producers and consumers as well as the global trading system. Research that could help identify how to change current incentives or institutions to increase the regional or global supply of welfare-increasing standards is also of interest.

U.S. trade agreements also envision the use of other international public goods to foster welfare-enhancing trade. We are interested in economic analyses that measure the costs of international public goods such as pest and disease eradication or joint IS surveillance efforts, as well as their benefits, which would include increased trade. The size and distribution of these costs and benefits may be affected by both natural and policy environments. For example, transborder disease control could increase social welfare more than autonomous national policies where natural barriers are low, when animals (including wildlife) move freely across borders, or when regional trade agreements have created the potential for the deep integration of markets between trading partners with contiguous borders. Are there products and hazards for which supra-national IS measures are more economically rational than national-level controls? ERS also seeks research that examines characteristics of international public goods—including non-rivalry of benefits, the possibility of being excluded from benefits, and the technology for aggregating public supply—that could inform decisions about the policies required for their provision and financing. Economic analyses that explicitly account for the level of development of trading partners are encouraged.

C. Trade-Related Invasive Species Risks, Regulations, and Responses: Firm-Level Analyses

While IS regulations are generally established at the national level, within the constraints of the rules of international trade agreements, decisions leading to the international movement of food and agricultural products are made by firms and private individuals. Rules and procedures governing the importation of plant and animal products can differ considerably depending not only on what is being imported but by whom—personal versus commercial shipments, owner versus transporter shipments, or broker versus non-broker shipments. Rules may also vary by the port of entry and whether the shipment is regarded as a routine or first-time entry. ERS seeks research that would improve understanding of how alternative rules and procedures for importing similar or identical products by different types of importers affect the costs and benefits of different exclusion and control strategies to reduce IS risks related to trade.

While IS interceptions or outbreaks may be rare events, a few incidents in recent years have substantially reduced the revenues of the firms associated with these problems. ERS is interested in research that links IS risks and changes in IS regulation to production and investment decisions by firms. In particular, we are interested in research that evaluates the effects of uncertainty on these business decisions. Are business decisionmakers more concerned with the probability of an event's occurring than the size of the event? What are the determinants of firms' reactions to events of different size, scope, and severity at different points along the supply chain? We are also soliciting research that identifies the determinants of firms' reactions to the timing, extent, or duration of IS measures to aid in the design of emergency and routine responses.

Eligibility Requirements, Award Types, and Indirect and Other Costs

The Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM) may select proposals for competitive awards under this announcement. **Applicants need not specify the type of award in their proposal. PREISM reserves the right to determine the type of award.** The type of award made for a selected proposal will be governed by the nature and degree of involvement desired by PREISM in the project and the type of institution requesting funding (see “Authority,” page 1). In accordance with Federal statutes, the amount of indirect cost ERS will pay is governed by the type of award and the type of institution receiving the award.

Proposals may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal, State, or county agencies, private organization, corporation, or individual. Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered.

The research proposed must be specifically designed for the three Priority Research Areas described previously. Proposals may include requests for conferences that bring together members of the interested research community to identify research needs, update information, or advance an area of research recognized as an integral part of the research effort.

Types of Awards

- **Grants:** Grants may be awarded when the research topic does not require substantial involvement between ERS staff and the recipient during the performance of the award.
- **Cooperative Agreements:** Cooperative agreements will be awarded when the research topic requires more substantial involvement between ERS and the investigator(s). There are two types of cooperative agreements: cooperative research agreements and assistance-type cooperative agreements. In a cooperative research agreement, ERS staff and extramural researchers are close collaborators and contributors to support the research; in an assistance-type cooperative agreement the extramural researchers are responsible for conducting the greater part of the work on the project. Cooperative research agreements require both parties to contribute to the funding of the project; assistance-type cooperative agreements do not have this joint funding requirement.

Indirect and Other Costs

Federal statutes dictate the amount of indirect costs that ERS pays by type of award and institution. In cooperative research agreements, ERS pays: no indirect costs to State cooperative institutions (i.e., land-grant universities and their constituent schools and departments); the negotiated indirect cost rate not to exceed 10 percent of total direct costs to nonprofit institutions other than State cooperative institutions; and the negotiated indirect cost rate not to exceed the audited rate of any federally recognized audit agency to other institutions. In competitive grants and assistance-type cooperative agreements, ERS pays the negotiated indirect cost rate not to exceed the audited rate of any federally recognized audit agency to State cooperative institutions and institutions other than State cooperative institutions and nonprofit institutions; and the negotiated indirect cost rate (no statutory limitation) to nonprofit institutions other than State cooperative institutions. For reimbursement of indirect costs, the applicant must include a copy of its indirect cost rate schedule with the application. Tuition shall be treated as an allowable cost, subject to negotiation, where reimbursement of such costs are not prohibited by law.

Peer Review of Applications

All proposals received will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 30 days of the submission deadline, please contact the PREISM office at (202) 694-5112 or e-mail: PREISM@ers.usda.gov.

Prior to technical examination, a preliminary review will be made for responsiveness to the three Priority Research Areas (for example, relationship of the proposal to one of the three research areas and proposed requirements). Proposals that do not fall within the guidelines as stated in this document will be eliminated from program competition, and the applicant will be notified in writing.

Peer review panels will be convened to review proposals in each research area. All applicants will be notified in writing by October 31, 2004, as to whether their proposal has been accepted for an award by PREISM.

Peer review panel members will be selected based upon their training and experience in relevant research or technical fields, taking into account the following factors:

- The level of formal social science or technical education and other relevant experience of the individual as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research and other relevant activities;
- The need to include as peer reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant social science or technical fields;
- The need to include as peer reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (for example, universities, industry, private consultant(s), and geographic locations); and
- The need to include as peer reviewers individuals with relevant program knowledge and experience.

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may have an impact on review or evaluation. Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as proposal content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential.

Evaluation Factors and Criteria

The proposal evaluation process includes both internal staff review and evaluation by peer review panels with members drawn from universities, industry, private consultants, and government officials. Peer review panels will be selected and structured to provide expertise and objective judgment in the evaluation of the proposals.

The peer review panel will use the following criteria and weights to evaluate proposals (100 points total):

Research Merit of the Proposal (weight: 35 points)

This criterion is used to assess the conceptual adequacy of the hypothesis or research question or information needed, the clarity and delineation of objectives, the adequacy of the description of the undertaking, and how the anticipated results will advance policy knowledge and the development and implementation of programs. Background information should be brief for proposals that address one of the topics described on pages 2-8; a more extensive justification is needed for a proposal with a nonlisted topic.

Overall Approach (weight: 30 points)

This criterion relates to the probability of success of project; time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives; analytic approach; and innovative and original research design, appropriateness of data, and suitability and feasibility of methodology.

Workplan, Budget, and Cost-Effectiveness (weight: 20 points)

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective. Reviewers will evaluate if the workplan is reasonable and sufficient to ensure timely implementation and completion of the study. The workplan should also provide evidence of the adequacy of available or attainable support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation. When achievement of the workplan requires collaboration, evidence is needed of the adequacy of support from and commitment to cooperation from any collaborative organization. The budget must be consistent with the scope of the work. Realistic budget projections will be rewarded.

Key Personnel (weight: 15 points)

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of the key persons who will carry out the project.

How To Obtain Application Materials

PREISM is using the Internet for primary distribution of information and application materials for its Competitive Awards Program. Please note that this document, with a downloadable budget form, is available on the PREISM website at:
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/InvasiveSpecies/funding>.

Photocopies of materials and the budget form (ARS-455) are acceptable. Paper copies may also be requested from:

Economic Research Service, USDA
PREISM Business Office
1800 M Street, NW, Room S3111
Washington, DC 20036-5831
Telephone: (202) 694-5112
Fax: (202) 694-5936
E-mail: PREISM@ers.usda.gov

Application Process

Overview

These guidelines are provided to assist you in preparing a proposal to the Competitive Awards Program of the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management. Please read these guidelines carefully before preparing your submission.

A checklist is provided at the beginning of this document to help you provide the necessary information for completing a proposal. A budget form ARS-455 is required for the proposal, and it may be obtained using the Internet or by requesting a paper copy; contact information is provided on page 12.

Submission Requirements

The purpose of a proposal is to persuade PREISM and members of the invasive species research community who provide advice to PREISM that the proposed project is important, methodologically sound, and worthy of support under the criteria listed on page 11. Therefore, the proposal must be submitted in response to one of the three Priority Research Areas (page 2). The application should be self-contained, should clearly present the merits of the proposed project, and should be written with care and thoroughness. It is important that all essential information for comprehensive evaluation be included. Omissions often result in processing delays and may jeopardize funding opportunities.

In preparing the proposal, applicants are urged to ensure that the name of the Principal Investigator and, where applicable, the name of the submitting institution are included on the Application for Funding Cover Page and **at the top of each page**. This will permit easy identification in the event that the application becomes disassembled during the review process.

Format and Contents of Proposals

Application for Funding Cover Page

Each copy of the proposal must contain an Application for Funding Cover Page. This is designed by the applicant but must be the first page of the application. At least one copy of this information must contain pen-and-ink signatures as outlined below. In completing this cover page include the following information:

- *Title of Proposal.* The title of the proposal must be brief (80-character maximum), yet represent the major thrust of the project. Because this title will be used to provide information to those who may not be familiar with the proposed project, highly technical words or phraseology should be avoided where possible. In addition, phrases such as “investigation of” or “research on” should not be used.
- *Program to Which You Are Applying.* “PREISM”
- *Priority Research Area.* Choose the Priority Research Area that is most appropriate to the research being proposed (i.e., stakeholders and incentives for efficient invasive species program management, practical decision tools for invasive species management, or trade and invasive species). It is important that only one research area be selected. When the appropriateness of the chosen research area may be in question, the final program area assignment will be made by the PREISM staff. The Principal Investigator will be informed of any changes in assigned research area.

- *Principal Investigator/Project Director.* List the name of the proposing Principal Investigator; there can be only one Principal Investigator or Project Director, who must sign the Application for Funding Cover Page. If the proposal has one or more co-investigator(s), all must be listed (signatures of co-investigators are not required) on the Application for Funding Cover Page. Co-investigators should be limited to those required for major research collaboration; minor collaborators or consultants are more appropriately designated as collaborators (see page 16). Only the Principal Investigator listed will receive direct correspondence from PREISM.
- *Type of Institution.* Identify the institution type of the Principal Investigator (awards can be to only one institution or individual); no other designation is accepted: Hispanic-Serving Institution, Land-Grant 1994 (Tribal Colleges and Universities), Land-Grant University 1862, Land-Grant University 1890 or Tuskegee University, Public University or College (Non-Land Grant), Private University or College, Cooperative Extension Service, State Agricultural Experiment Station, USDA/REE Laboratory, Other Federal Research Laboratory, State or Local Government, Minority-Owned Business, Female-Owned Business, Small Business, Private Profit-Making, Private Nonprofit, Individual, Other (specify). Contact your institution's business office if you have any question regarding the proper identification of type of institution.
- *Telephone Numbers.* Please list the telephone and fax numbers and the e-mail addresses (if available) of the Principal Investigator and co-investigators. In addition, please include a telephone number where a message can be left, if different from above.
- *Signatures.* Sign and date the Application for Funding Cover Page. All proposals must be signed by the proposing Principal Investigator and, for those proposals being submitted through institutions or organizations, endorsed by the authorized organizational representative who possesses the necessary authority to commit the applicant's time and other relevant resources. The Principal Investigator, who signed the Application for Funding Cover Page, will be listed on the grant or cooperative agreement award document in the event that an award is made. Proposals that do not contain the signature of the authorized organizational representative cannot be considered for support.

Table of Contents

A Table of Contents, itself unpaginated, should be placed immediately after the Application for Funding Cover Page. This table should direct the reader to the pages for all sections of the proposal, beginning with the Project Description on page 1.

Project Summary

The proposal must contain a Project Summary, and must be assembled as the third page of the proposal (immediately after the Table of Contents) and should not be numbered. The names and institutions of the Principal Investigator and all co-investigators should be listed on the summary page (if space is insufficient, please use a separate sheet immediately following the Project Summary in the proposal). The Project Summary is limited to 250 words. The summary is not intended for the general reader; consequently, it may contain technical language comprehensible by persons in disciplines relating to the food and agricultural sciences. The project summary should be a self-contained, specific description of the activity to be undertaken and should focus on:

- Overall project goal(s) and supporting objectives; and
- Plans to accomplish project goal(s).

The importance of a concise, informative project summary cannot be overemphasized.

Project Description

The written text may not exceed 15 pages (whether single- or double-spaced) of written text and may not exceed a total of 20 pages including figures and tables. The proposal should be assembled so that the Project Description immediately follows the Project Summary. To clarify page limitation requirements, page numbering for the Project Description should start with 1, and should be placed on the bottom of the page. The 15-page limitation does not include figures, tables, or attachments such as a survey instrument (if relevant). All proposals are to be submitted on standard 8½" x 11" paper. In addition, margins must be at least 1 inch, type size must be 12 point (equivalent to this size for some printers is 10 pitch or 10 characters per inch, which is also acceptable), there should be no more than six (6) lines per inch, and there should be no page reductions. The project description must contain the following components:

- *Introduction.* A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. The most significant published work in the field under consideration, including the work of key project personnel on the current application, should be reviewed. The current status of research in this field should also be described.
- *Rationale and Significance.* Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. The objectives' specific relationship to the potential long-term improvement in the efficiency of the USDA's invasive species programs should be shown clearly. These purposes are described under Priority Research Areas on page 2. Any novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.
- *Research Methods.* The hypotheses or questions being asked and the methodology being applied to the proposed project should be stated explicitly. Specifically, this section must include:
 - A description of the research proposed in the sequence in which it is to be performed;
 - Techniques to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the techniques;
 - Explanation of data collection methods, including interviewer training, sample design and selection, and measures for obtaining adequate response rates (for proposed projects that plan to collect survey data);
 - Results expected;
 - Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
 - Discussion of relevant variables and of model specification issues (for proposed projects that plan to use multivariate analysis);
 - Possible application of results;
 - Pitfalls that may be encountered;
 - Limitations to proposed procedures; and
 - A tentative schedule or workplan for conducting major steps of study.

In describing the research plan, the applicant must explain fully any materials, procedures, situations, or activities that may be hazardous to personnel (whether or not they are directly related to a particular phase of the proposed project), along with an outline of precautions to be taken to avoid or mitigate the effects of such hazards.

Note: The sections detailed below are not included in the page limitations for the Project Description section.

Citations to Project Description

All references cited should be complete, including titles and all co-authors, and should conform to an accepted journal format.

Collaborative Arrangements

If the nature of the proposed project requires collaboration or subcontractual arrangements with other research scientists, corporations, organizations, agencies, or entities, the applicant must identify the collaborator(s) and provide a full explanation of the nature of the collaboration. Evidence (that is, letters of intent) should be provided to assure peer reviewers that the collaborators involved have agreed to render this service.

When a project requests funds for multiple institutions, a lead institution must be designated. Only one proposal may be submitted for the project and only from the lead institution. Other institutions may be designated as subcontractors. Proposals with Application for Funding Cover Pages from more than one institution are not permitted and will be returned without review. Identical proposals submitted by different investigators from different institutions are also not permitted and will be returned without review.

Vitae and Publications List(s)

To assist peer reviewers in assessing the competence and experience of the proposed project staff, all personnel who will be involved in the proposed project must be identified clearly. For the Principal Investigator and each co-investigator listed on the Application for Funding Cover Page, for all collaborators and other senior personnel who expect to work on the project in a significant fashion (for instance, expectation of co-authorships on ensuing publications) whether or not funds are sought for their support, and for all subcontractors, the following should be included:

- *Curriculum Vitae (CV)*. The curriculum vitae should be limited to a presentation of academic and research credentials, such as educational, employment, and professional history, honors, and awards. The vitae shall be no more than two pages each in length, excluding publications listings; and
- *Publications List(s)*. A chronological list of all publications in refereed journals during the past 5 years, including those in press, must be provided for each professional project member for whom a curriculum vitae is provided. Also list only those non-refereed technical publications relevant to the proposed project. All authors should be listed in the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with the title and complete references as these usually appear in journals.

Budget (Form ARS-455)

A summary budget is required detailing requested support for the overall project period, which is not to exceed 3 years. Funding levels accepted are between \$50,000 and \$250,000, inclusive of indirect cost where applicable, for the duration of the project.

Funds may be requested under any of the budget categories listed, provided that the item or service requested is identified as necessary for successful conduct of the proposed project, allowable under applicable Federal cost principles, and not prohibited under any applicable Federal statute or regulation.

Budget items include:

- Salaries and wages
- Nonexpendable equipment
- Materials and supplies
- Travel
- Publication costs/page charges
- Computer costs
- Other direct costs
- Indirect costs
- Cost sharing (ignore this category, may be requested later for cooperative agreements)

Salaries of faculty members and other personnel who will be working on the project may be requested in proportion to the effort they will devote to the project.

See page 12 to obtain a paper copy or an electronic copy.

Indirect Cost Rate Schedule

For reimbursement of indirect costs, the applicant must include with the application a copy of its indirect cost rate schedule that reports the applicant's federally negotiated audited rate.

Current and Pending Support

The information in this section of the proposal provides reviewers with an opportunity to evaluate the contribution the proposed work will make to the investigators' overall research program.

The proposal must list any other current public or private research support (including in-house support) to the Principal Investigator or co-investigators listed on the Application for Funding Cover Page, whether or not salary support for the person(s) involved is included in the budget. PREISM must be informed of changes in pending grant support that arise after the proposal has been submitted. Nonflexible funds—including Principal Investigator and support staff salaries, office space, and other indirect costs—may be excluded when these funds are received through a noncompetitive process. Analogous information must be provided for any pending proposals, including this proposal, that are now being considered by, or that will be submitted in the near future to, other possible sponsors, including other USDA programs or agencies. Note that this proposal must be listed as Pending. In addition to completing the information, Investigators also should include a brief statement of research objectives or project summaries for all projects listed in Current and Pending Support. Concurrent submission of identical or similar proposals to other possible sponsors will not prejudice proposal review or evaluation by PREISM or experts engaged by PREISM for this purpose. However, a proposal that duplicates or overlaps substantially with a proposal already reviewed and funded (or that will be funded) by PREISM will not be funded under this program.

Please include the following information under the heading “Current and Pending Support.”

- Record information for active and pending projects in separate sections by name, supporting agency, total funding amount, effective and expiration dates, percentage of time committed, and title of project.
- All current research to which the Principal Investigator, co-investigators, and other senior personnel have committed a portion of their time must be listed, whether or not salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects.

Additions to Project Description

Each project description is expected to be complete without the need to refer to additional materials. However, additions to the Project Description (appendices) are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed research. These may include reprints (papers that have been published in peer-reviewed journals) or preprints (manuscripts in press for a peer-reviewed journal must be accompanied by letter of acceptance from the publishing journal).

Manuscripts sent in support of the proposal should be single-spaced and printed on both sides of the page. Each manuscript must be identified with the name of the submitting organization, the name of the Principal Investigator, and the title of the proposal, and be securely attached to each copy of the proposal. Staff of PREISM will not collate applicant proposals or proposal addenda.

Information may not be appended to a proposal to circumvent page limitations prescribed for the project description. Extraneous materials will not be used during the review process.

What/Where To Submit

An original and 12 copies of the application are required. Due to the volume of proposals that are expected and the difficulty in identifying proposals submitted in several packages, all copies of each proposal must be mailed in a single package. In addition, please ensure that each copy of the proposal is stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the proposal contains all pertinent information when originally submitted. Prior to mailing, it is urged that the proposal be compared with the checklist on the inside front cover of this announcement.

To ensure prompt receipt of submitted proposals, use First Class or Express mail, or a courier service. To be considered for funding this fiscal year, proposals (an original and 12 copies) must be transmitted by April 30, 2004 (as indicated by postmark or date on courier bill of lading). Late proposals will not be considered. Electronic or fax submissions will not be accepted.

Address for Submitting Proposals:

Economic Research Service, USDA
PREISM Business Office
1800 M Street, NW, Room S3111
Washington, DC 20036-5831

Proposal Disposition

PREISM will select those proposals that will be offered an award based upon peer review, research priorities, and the availability of funding.

PREISM reserves the right to negotiate with the Principal Investigator or project director and/or with the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (for example, reductions in the scope of work), funding level, or period or method of support prior to recommending any project for funding.

A proposal may be withdrawn by the Principal Investigator at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the proposal; however, withdrawn proposals normally will not be returned. One copy of each proposal that is not selected for funding (including those that are withdrawn) will be retained by PREISM for a period of one (1) year. The remaining copies will be destroyed.

Duration of Awards

The total period for which an award is made may not exceed 3 years.

Management Information

Once a proposal has been reviewed and recommended for funding, specific management and organizational information relating to the applicant shall be requested on a one-time basis prior to the award. Copies of forms needed in fulfilling the requirements will be provided by the PREISM office.

Notice of Award

An award document, containing the budget, terms and conditions of the award, and other necessary information, will be prepared and forwarded to each grantee or cooperator by the Administrative and Financial Management, ARS, USDA.

Financial Obligations

For any agreement awarded, the maximum financial obligation of ERS shall be the amount of funds authorized for the award. This amount will be stated on the award instrument and on the approved budget. However, in the event an erroneous amount is stated on the award instrument, the approved budget, or any supporting document, ERS reserves the unilateral right to make the correction and to make an appropriate adjustment in the amount of the award to align with the authorized amount.

Nothing in these guidelines or any program announcement shall obligate ERS, the Department of Agriculture, or the United States to take favorable action on any application received in response to any announcement, or to support any project at a particular level. Further, neither the approval of any application nor the award of any agreement shall commit or obligate the United States in any way to make any renewal, supplemental, continuation, or other award with respect to any approved application or portion of an approved application.

Post-Award Administration

Awardees will be required to ensure that all funds are expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of competitive awards, Departmental regulations, and the applicable Federal cost principles in effect on the date of the award. Responsibility for the use and expenditure of competitive award funds may not be transferred or delegated in whole or in part to another party (even if a grantee or cooperator enters into a contractual relationship with that party), unless the competitive award itself is transferred in whole or in part to another party by ERS.

Authorization to make changes in approved project plans, budget, period of support, etc., will be governed largely by the terms and conditions of the award document. Among other things, these terms and conditions will set forth the kinds of post-award changes that may be made by the awardee and the kinds of changes that are reserved to the PREISM Office. It is urged that all key project personnel and authorized organizational representatives read them carefully.

Release of Information

ERS receives proposals in confidence and will protect the confidentiality of their contents to the extent permitted by law. When a proposal results in a competitive award, however, it becomes part of the public record and is available to the public upon written request. Copies of proposals (including excerpts from proposals) that are not funded will not be released. Information regarding funded projects will be made available to the extent permitted under the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, and implementing USDA regulations.

Requests to obtain authorized information (and fee schedule relating to the handling of this information) or to obtain information regarding procedures related to release of grantor competitive award information should be directed to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Coordinator, ARS Information Staff, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., Bldg. 1, Rm. 2248, Mail Stop 5128, Beltsville, MD 20705-5128; telephone (301) 504-1640.