NIMSS and Multistate Project
Information and Instruction Guide
Mississippi State University

What is NIMSS?

NIMSS is the acronym for the National Information Management and Support System. It is a joint project of the four Regional Associations:

- NCRA- North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
- NERA- Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
- SAAESD- Southern Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
- WAAESD- Western Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

NIMSS is designed to facilitate the work of the Agricultural Experiment Station Director in managing the station's Multistate Research portfolio. It is purely a web-based application to allow submission and search of information online, anytime, anywhere.

What is the Multistate Research Program?

The multistate research program, authorized by the Hatch Act, enables research on high priority topics among the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) in partnership with NIFA, other research institutions and agencies, and with the Cooperative Extension Service (CES). In this way, technological opportunities and complex problem solving activities which are beyond the scope of a single SAES, can be approached in a more efficient and comprehensive way. These activities involve cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches. They are oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on priorities developed from stakeholder input and are responsive to NIFA goals.

The multistate research program is funded through the Hatch Act, one of several formula fund appropriations which NIFA allocates to the 50 states and territories on a formula based on population and other factors. Not less than 25 percent of Hatch funds are allocated for the Multistate Research Fund (MRF). In FY2007, 25% of the Hatch allocation or approximately $81 million was expended on multistate activities.

Multistate research activities are managed and documented through the National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS) at the University of Maryland.

Criteria for Multistate Research Projects

Multistate research projects most often begin with a broad group of stakeholders who interact with faculty and staff at the state agricultural experiment stations. Consequently, the projects address problems or issues directly confronting stakeholders that require further research for resolution. Faculty and staff then generate a proposal that is submitted to one of the four geographical regional associations of agricultural experiment station directors. The project is then subjected to the policies and procedures governing the Multistate Research Fund program. Multistate research policies and procedures are contained in the National Multistate Guidelines. Each multistate project is required to meet the following criteria:

A Multistate activity involves cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a SAES, working with other SAES, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), or a college or university, cooperates to solve problems that concern more than one state and usually more than one region. In addition, the following must be demonstrated in the project proposal:

1. The objectives are clearly focused.
2. Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of the stated objectives.
3. The project is multistate and multidisciplinary.
4. The project proposal has been peer-reviewed.
5. The proposed project is oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on priorities developed from stakeholder input.
6. The project is responsive to NIFA goals.

Descriptions of the type of projects can be found in the table below.   Please be aware the first two are the only type of projects in which MAFES receives Multi-State Hatch dollars. The remaining descriptions are committees and/or Extension activities.

Types of Multistate Research Activities Projects

Description	Northeast Region	North Central Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Multistate Research Project Projects that involve integrated, potentially interdisciplinary, and multistate activities; have expected outcomes, including original research results; convey knowledge; and are peer reviewed.	NE-xxx	NC-xxx	S-xxx	W-xxx
500 Series Committees formed, for a maximum of two years, to provide a mechanism for response to acute crises, emergencies, and opportunities using the multistate research approach. Activities may range from formally organized research on targeted objectives to very informal research coordination or information exchange activity, depending on the circumstances; have expected outcomes; convey knowledge; and are peer reviewed.	NE-5xx	NC-5xx	S-5xx	W-5xx
National Research Support Project (NRSP) Activities that focuses on the development of enabling technologies, support activities (such as to collect, assemble, store, and distribute materials, resources and information), or the sharing of facilities needed to accomplish high priority research, but which is not of itself primarily research; funded through off-the-top MRF Hatch appropriations; and are peer reviewed.	NRSP-xx	NRSP-xx	NRSP-xx	NRSP-xx
Coordinating Committees Activities that provide a mechanism for addressing critical regional issues where multistate coordination or information exchange is appropriate within a function (ie. research, education or extension); have expected outcomes; convey knowledge; and are peer reviewed.	NECC-xxx	NCCC-xxx	SCC-xxx	WCC-xxx
Education/Extension and Research Activity Activities that serve to integrate education (academic and/or extension) and research on a particular topic where multistate coordination or information exchange is appropriate; have expected outcomes; convey knowledge; and are peer reviewed.	NEERA-xxx	NCERA-xxx	SERA-xxx	WERA-xxx
Development Committee Committees of duration less than two years for the purpose of developing a Multistate Activity; have the expected outcome of a full proposal for a particular Multistate Activity; and are peer reviewed.	NEDC-xxx	NCDC-xxx	SDC-xxx	WDC-xxx
Advisory Committee Committees of department chairs/heads from a particular discipline that exchange information and serve a multistate administrative function through review of multistate activities, but are not peer reviewed.	NEAC-xx	NCAC-xx	SAC-xx	WAC-xx

Instructional Guide

Searching the NIMSS System:

You may search the NIMSS system by going to the following website:

http://www.nimss.org

Once you have entered the above address you will be directed to the guest menu at which you have three options from which to choose:

1. Project Home
   a. This will show you the contact information and Homepage for each State Agriculture Experiment Station (SAES).

2. Search
   a. The Search option allows you to search for a project or person.

3. Member Login & Registration
   a. Clicking here allows you to become a member of the NIMSS system.
   b. You must have a member login and registration to join a project.

Searching and Viewing Participation:

If you are looking for a project in which to join you may do so in the guest menu however in order to join a project please remember you must be a member.   To search for a project begin by clicking on the search button. You may than search by:

1. Project Number (if known)
2. Project Title
3. By Region
4. Type of Project (Please see the above table for a definition of the below project types)
   a. MRP (Multistate Research Project)
   b. CC or ERA (Coordinating Committees or Education/Extension and Research Activity)
   c. Rapid Response
   d. NRSP (National Research Support Project)

View Participation by Station:

You may view participation of the project by Station or Project Region.

1. Click on "By Station" on the left side of the "View Participants" screen.
2. In the "Region" drop-down menu, choose the region to which the state you are interested in belongs (North Central, Northeast, Southern, Western).
3. In the "Station" drop-down menu, select the station you would like to view.
4. This should automatically generate the participant information for that station.
5. Click the "Print Version" button to obtain a clean copy for printing.

View Participation by Project Region:

1. Click on "By Project Region" on the left side of the "View Participants" screen.
2. From the "Region" drop-down menu, choose the region from which you would like to view participation. Scroll down the page to view participation <u>by project</u>, by <u>region/state</u>, or view a <u>pie chart graphic</u> displaying regional involvement on the projects in the specified region (from the drop-down at the top of the page).
   a. *Part 1: State Participation by Project*
      -This section displays all of the active projects from the specified region by project number, title, and participating cooperators.
   b. *Part 2: State Participation*
      -This section displays institutional involvement divided by region (SAES and other entities (extension, 1890, and private party institutions).
   c. *Pie Chart to Illustrate Regional Participation*
      -Scroll to the bottom of the webpage to view a pie chart illustrating total regional participation on a specified region's projects.
3. Click the "Print Version" button to obtain a clean copy for printing.

Joining a Multi-State Project:

When you have found a project of interest and wish to join the project you will log in to the NIMSS system using your member log-in and password.   Please be sure to make sure the project you join is an active project before joining.

1. Click on Participants
2. Draft/Edit Participant Info
3. Draft New
4. Complete the Appendix E information (See attached Appendix E.)

Once this has been submitted an email will be forwarded to the college level for approval. When approved you should receive a confirming email containing the status of you participation from the Project Director.

After joining a Multi-State Project you are also required to enter a Multi-State CRIS Project in the REEport System.   See Procedures for writing Hatch and Multi-State Projects at the following website http://mafes.msstate.edu/faculty-staff/forms_promotions.asp