**NIFA Instructions for Final Reports**

**What to Include in the Final Report Data Fields**

Helpful Hints & Policy Information on Final Report Data Entry:

* **The Final Report is meant to cover the life of your project**; thus, you should make sure to write your report in a manner that summarizes and includes all the major activities and accomplishments achieved while your project was active. The only exception to this rule is the FTE field and the Products page:
	+ For FTEs, only report total FTEs for the current performance period of the project (which starts at the end date of your last progress report and ends at the end date of your project).
	+ For Products, only include those that you have NOT previously included on a prior Progress Report, regardless of when they occurred. For example, if you have not yet reported a publication that resulted from the first year of work on your project, then include it now in this final report.
* For guidance as you work through the form, remember to use the embedded Help Text by clicking on the small (?) located next to each field found within Digital Measures (DM).
* There are character limits on all fields in DM, but the main one to be aware of is for all the large text boxes with the built-in text editor**, there is an 8000 character limit, including spaces**.
* DM does not accept graphics, charts, or other images pasted into any of the open text boxes.

**Participants**

Note that there is a “nothing to report” box at the top of the page, above the “project director” field. You may click this box if there were no actual FTEs used to support this project for the reporting period being reported against.

Project Director and Co-Project Directors: Both of these fields are prepopulated with the information originally entered in project initiation; any changes would need to be made through the “Project Change” module.

Actual FTEs for the Reporting Period: Enter the **actual** Full-time equivalent(s) (FTE) that **supported this project over the course of this reporting period only** (reporting period is one year or less; refer back to your cover page for the exact reporting period)**.** An FTE is defined by the **Government Accountability Office** (GAO) as the number of total hours worked divided by the maximum number of compensable hours in a full-time schedule as defined by law. For most NIFA partners and places of employment, a full- time schedule as defined by law equates to 2,080 hours of work (52 weeks multiplied by 40 hours per week). Thus, a person who works 40 hours per week for 52 weeks towards a project equals 1 FTE. A person who works 20 hours per week towards a project for 52 weeks per year equals .5 of an FTE.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** You may enter fractions of FTEs rounded to the nearest tenth. Make sure to separate the FTEs by type as indicated on the table provided: Faculty and Non-Students in the first column and Students with Staffing Roles in the subsequent three columns. Also ensure that the FTE categories are correctly populated, differentiating between the following:

**Scientist**: A research worker responsible for original thought, judgments, and accomplishments in independent scientific study. This includes investigation leaders and project leaders and portions of the time of supervising scientists or staff assistants who meet the preceding definition. Examples: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Scientist.

**Professional**: A professional does not qualify as a scientist under the preceding definitions but may still significantly contribute to research activities. Professionals usually hold one or more college degrees and have otherwise qualified for employments in a professional category. Generally, professionals have a high degree of research activity responsibility but do not hold principal investigator status or equivalent at the reporting institution. Examples: Department Head, Resident Director, Statistician, Analyst, Assistant Director, Dean.

**Technical:** Technical Staff are associated with research efforts in a technical capacity and do not participate in the investigative aspects of the research. Examples: Lab Assistant, Mechanic, Carpenter, Machinist, Skilled Tradesperson.

**Administrative and Other:** These are clerical and support staff who contribute to the non-technical support of the project. It is often difficult to assess an individual's clerical and labor support to any one project; they usually support groups of researchers of different projects in a broad manner, such as by ordering supplies, typing reports, managing bill payments, performing janitorial work. Examples: Secretary, Typist, Repairman, Janitor, Data Entry.

**Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code**

**Student FTEs** reported, now require that you enter any applicable CIP codes. The data entered into the Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Doctorate CIP fields, are the **Number of Students** that worked on the project, and therefore must be whole numbers. Student FTEs and CIP codes are interconnected data points, and the data entered into these sections must have a logical relationship. There are automatic validations programmed into the system which will indicate if any of the numbers entered need to be adjusted.

* For example – if 5.0 FTEs were entered for Graduate students, then the CIP code field must reflect 5 or more participants in the Graduate section for CIP codes.

The CIP code chosen should reflect the student’s major field of study; the same student should not be listed under multiple CIP codes. The CIP taxonomy includes about 5,000 codes, categorized into three tiers. The list of CIP codes provided in the dropdown menu in DM includes tiers 1 and 2, or about 400 codes. For more information on CIP Codes, you can visit the CIP website at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode, where detailed information about the CIP coding system is available.

**Target Audience**

**Target audiences** include individuals, groups, market segments, or communities that will be served by the project. Where appropriate, you should also identify population groups such as racial and ethnic minorities and those who are socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged. Make sure your description of the target audiences describes why you are targeting this particular group(s). The entire purpose of this section is to answer the question “to whom does your work/research matter and why?” Think about it this way: there must be a reason you are targeting a certain group(s) or audience(s) of people. If there wasn’t, then you would have no reason to be naming them in this section!

In thinking about your target audience, think about how you reached it/them. **Efforts** to reach a target audience include acts or processes that deliver science-based knowledge to people through formal or informal educational programs. Examples include: formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, or practicum experiences; development of curriculum or innovative teaching methodologies; internships; workshops; experiential learning opportunities; extension and outreach.

**Note**: You do not need to provide an in-depth description of the efforts themselves in this section; we list out efforts here in order to help you think about WHOM you targeted so that you can accurately identify and describe your target audience.

**Products**

Publications:

Identify the standard products/outputs that have been achieved during this reporting period. This includes only publications, patents, and applications for plant variety protection (PVP). In DM standard products/outputs are entered under specific subheadings in the Research and Creative Endeavors section and don’t need to be entered as part of your Ag Experiment Station report. However, if you don’t link them to your Ag Experiment Station project by entering the AES project number, they won’t get credited to your project. You will report other types of products/outputs in the "Other Products" section.

Report only the major publication(s) resulting from the work under this project/award. If this is NOT the first progress report you've submitted, do not include publications already included in any previously submitted progress report(s). There is no restriction on the number. However, agencies are interested in only those publications that most reflect the work under this project/award. See definitions below for the categories of publications.

**Definitions:**

**Publications** are the characteristic product of research. Agencies evaluate what the publications demonstrate about the excellence and significance of the research and the efficacy with which the results are being communicated to colleagues, potential users, and the public, not the number of publications.

**Journal publications:** Peer-reviewed articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical, or professional journals. Include any peer reviewed publication in the periodically published

proceedings of a scientific society, a conference, or the like. A publication in the proceedings of a one-time conference, not part of a series, should be reported under “Books or other non- periodical, one-time publications.”

**Books or other non-periodical, one-time publications:** Any book, monograph, dissertation, abstract, or the like published as or in a separate publication, rather than a periodical or series. Include any significant publication in the proceedings of a one-time conference or in the report of a one-time study, commission, or the like.

**Other publications, conference papers and presentations:** Identify any other publications, conference papers and/or presentations not reported above.

Patent(s) and Plant Variety Protection(s) (PVP)

Identify inventions for which patents or plant variety protection (PVP) have been or will be sought. Include patent/PVP applications that have been filed with the patent or PVP office for more than 18 months. Include the date of application for an award of patent /PVP protection and/or licenses that have resulted from the research. Submission of this information as part of this Progress Report is not a substitute for any other invention reporting required under the terms and conditions of any award.

Other Products:

Enter the significant products/outputs achieved during the **project duration** as a result of the project's research, extension or education activities. NIFA considers the terms “products” and “outputs” to be synonymous. Do not include publications, patents, and plant variety protection applications; those should be included elsewhere in DM.

**Other Products/Outputs** are activities, events, services, and products that reach people.

* **Activities** include: conducting and analyzing experiments or surveys, assessments, facilitating, teaching, or mentoring.
* **Events** include: conferences, demonstration sites, field days, symposia, workshops, and trainings.
* **Services** include: consulting, counseling, and tutoring.
* **Products** include: audio or video products; curricula; data or databases; equipment or instruments; models; networks and/or collaborations fostered by the project or activity; physical collections or resources, new animal germplasm, or genetic maps or sequences; software; technology, methods, or techniques; train-the-trainer manuals; website(s) with the appropriate URL(s); information, skills, and technology for individuals, communities, and programs; or students graduated in agricultural sciences.

**Accomplishments**

Keep in mind that referring back to the goals/objectives for your project is helpful when filling in the various fields on the accomplishments page, as anything reported on those fields should relate directly back to the goals of the project.

***Data Field/Box #1: What was accomplished under these goals?***

This accomplishment section should reflect the results and conclusion of your work that will provide benefits to broad audiences. It is imperative that this portion of your report be written in plain, non- technical language. Please use qualitative and quantitative metrics that will be meaningful to non- scientific audiences such as community leaders, politicians, taxpayers, and farmers. You will need to translate results of your work into lay terms – things that everyday people can relate to. Consider reporting things like changes in economics, community dynamics, environmental conditions, or agricultural norms.

**This field/box should include the details on the work done towards each objective and a description of the impact this project has had OVER ITS DURATION. To help frame your accomplishments for this FINAL REPORT, work through the following questions. After doing so, you should be able to put your answers together to form a succinct IMPACT DESCRIPTION that describes your accomplishments during the reporting period.**

1. In a few sentences, what is the issue or problem that your project addresses (i.e.; what are you trying to help solve, fix, mitigate, improve?)

2. Who or what will be most immediately helped by your work, and how? (Hint: What audience did you originally intend for your work to impact?)

3. For each goal and objective listed in your project initiation form (shown at the top of the screen), describe for this reporting period:

* Major activities completed / experiments conducted;
* Data collected; and
* Summary statistics and discussion of results.

4. In about one page of text, what did your project do about this issue/problem during this reporting period? (HINT: Revisit your logic model’s inputs, outputs and outcomes to describe accomplishments.) ***Provide about one page of text to answer this question***, remembering that most people who read your FINAL REPORT are not technically trained or educated in your field of expertise. Write in a manner that is meaningful to readers, stakeholders, USDA administration, and Congress.

***Box #2: What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?***

Describe training and professional development provided by the project. **Training activities** are those in which individuals with advanced professional skills and experience assist others to achieve greater proficiency. **Professional development** activities result in increased knowledge or skill in one’s area of expertise.

**Examples of** training and professional development **activities include** courses, one-on-one work with a mentor, workshops, conferences, seminars, study groups, and individual study. Include participation in conferences, workshops, and seminars not listed under major activities.

If the research is not intended to provide training and professional development opportunities or there is nothing significant to report during this reporting period, click the "nothing to report" box.

***Box #3: How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?***

Describe how the results have been disseminated to communities of interest. Include any outreach activities that have been undertaken to reach members of communities who are not usually aware of

these research activities for the purpose of enhancing public understanding and increasing interest in learning and careers in science, technology, and the humanities. For this section, think back to whom you described in the “target audience” section of the report. That was where you described the WHO part of the equation. In answering the above question, you should be describing the HOW part of the equation – how did you reach your target audience. What efforts helped you reach communities that are interested in or who will benefit from your work?

***Box #4: What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?***

Since this is your final report, you don’t have a “next reporting period” to accomplish your goals, so you may check the “nothing to report” box.

**Changes/Problems**

Describe major changes/problems in approach and reason(s) for these major changes. If applicable, provide special and/or additional reporting requirements specified in the award Terms and Conditions.

Major changes include:

* major problems or delays that may have a significant impact on the rate of expenditure;
* significant deviations from research schedule or goals;
* unexpected outcomes;
* or changes in approved protocols for the use or care of animals, human subjects, and/or biohazards encountered during the reporting period.