

A photograph of two people standing in a nursery or greenhouse. They are positioned under a wooden trellis structure. The person on the left is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The person on the right is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt, a white apron, and a white cap. They appear to be looking at plants. The background shows a chain-link fence and some trees. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# **Tips for Successful Collaboration**

Mike O'Neill, National Program Leader  
Lisa Duriancik, Program Specialist

# Workshop Goal

- Increase collaboration among colleagues in the national water network
- Increase the number and competitiveness of proposals submitted by
  - Historically Black Land Grant Colleges and Universities (1890s)
  - 1994 Tribal Land Grant Colleges and Universities
  - Island and territory partner institutions
  - Hispanic Serving Institutions
- Increase capacity to address water resource issues for all audiences across the Nation



# Identifying the Issue

- Relevance:
  - to your watershed or region
  - to RFA program priorities
  - U.S. agriculture, rural and urbanizing communities
- Is the topic something of interest to multiple potential partners at other institutions?
- Is an innovative approach needed to address this issue?



# Building a Team

- Would others be logical partners on the project?
  - Build on existing partnerships
- Do you need additional expertise not represented on your team?
  - Should new partners be included?
- Build a team representing the integrated approach (research, education, extension)
- Acknowledging potential partners social and cultural perspectives on natural resource issues

# Successful Teams



- Mutual respect
- Trust
- Follow-through on commitments
- Effective communication
- Shared values
- Flexibility

# Stakeholders

- Substantial involvement by stakeholders will help to ensure true integration
- Include them in identifying the problem, developing the project, and evaluating progress
- Maintain regular and effective communication
- Consider creating a stakeholder advisory committee

# Developing the Proposal

---

- READ THE RFA!
- Start early – it takes time
  - Understand what is important to all team members
- Involve all team members from the beginning
- Do all team members have a logical and clearly defined role?
- Integrate the disciplines and/or functions in the proposal
  - Proposal should be cohesive and seamless

# Developing the Proposal

---

- Address the program's evaluation criteria and priorities as stated in the RFA
- Clearly identify the stakeholder community and their involvement in the project
  - Include letters of support when appropriate
- Are funds allocated properly among team members to achieve the objectives?

# Logistics to Consider

---

- It takes a LONG time to develop a successful collaboration!
  - Doesn't happen overnight
- Be creative about how and when you can work together
  - Take advantage of other meetings and travel
  - Consider using technology to collaborate

# Opportunities: NIWQP



- Extension Education
  - adoption outreach for minority and limited resource farmers and ranchers
- Within a regional project
- National Facilitation projects
  - Capacity building projects
  - Topical projects

# Opportunities: NRI



- Standard research grant
- Strengthening grants for research proposals
  - Sabbatical grants
  - Seed grants
  - Equipment grants
  - Contact: Mary Ann Rozum (Water), Nancy Cavallaro (Soils), Diana Jerkins (Managed Ecosystems)



# Learn the Process

---

- Participate as a panelist
  - Learn what constitutes a quality proposal
  - Learn from others' mistakes
- Interested in serving as a reviewer?
  - Give name to Mike, Mary Ann, or Lisa
  - Or send email to [newreviewer@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:newreviewer@csrees.usda.gov)

# Good Luck!

- Mike O'Neill, National Program Leader
  - [moneill@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:moneill@csrees.usda.gov)
- Lisa Duriancik, Program Specialist
  - [lduriancik@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:lduriancik@csrees.usda.gov)

