

# NERA Best Practices Session Topics

## September 2023

### Previous

- Hatch Project Management; i.e., Project Development & Review, Reporting, and Budget Distribution Mechanisms (NERA 3/07)
- Effecting Change, Keeping Institutions Agile, Replacing Unproductive Tenured Staff (NERA 7/07)
- Allocation of Space; i.e., Office, Lab, Greenhouse, Field, etc. (ESS 9/07)
- Re-Directing Non-Productive or Unnecessary Faculty Research Programs (Re-Treading/Re-Training). (ESS 9/07)
- Estimating Costs of Raising and Managing Research Animals and Implementing Per Diem Charges; Decision Processes, Transition, Oversight, etc. (NERA 3/08)
- Budgeting for New Faculty Hires (Including Start-Up and Spousal Hires); Unique Start-Up Packages, Inter-College Spousal Hiring, Funding Start-Ups, etc. (NERA 7/08)
- Managing Significant Budget Reductions; i.e., Selective vs. Across-the-Board, Prioritization, Creative Funding Mechanisms, etc. (NERA 3/09; ESS 9/08)
- Relationships with State Departments of Agriculture (NERA 7/09)
- Institutional and Regional Responses to Budget Reductions (NERA 9/09)
- Managing High Cost Agricultural Research Facilities (ESS 9/09)
- Positioning NERA Institutions and Scientists for the New AFRI RFP (NERA 3/10)
- Adoption of a "*Culture Of Sustainability*" in Our Institutions (NERA 3/10)
- Encouraging Collaborations (NERA 7/10)
- Coordinated Regional Research on Invasive Plants (NERA 9/10)
- Documenting Impacts, How and Why (ESS 9/10)
- How Do We Want to Handle Dairy Support in the Region? (NERA 3/11)
- Intellectual Property: How It is Handled and the Role of Experiment Stations (NERA 3/11)
- Sustainable Campus Operations (ESS 9/11)
- Structuring University-Wide Centers and Institutes; Issues and Solutions (ESS 9/11)
- Program Evaluation in Plans-of-Work and Annual Reports (NERA 3/12)
- Forming, Managing and Benefitting from AES External Advisory and Advocacy Committees; What Works and What Doesn't (NERA 3/12)
- Encouraging Leadership Development for Faculty and Staff – LEAD 21 or campus-based programs (NERA 3/12)
- Future of Animal Research Programs (ESS 9/12)
- Small Farms Viability (ESS9/12)
- Resources/Faculty Sharing (NERA 3/13)
- Establishment of a Grant Support Unit in the Experiment Station, College or University Level (NERA 3/13)
- Resource Use in Our Experiment Station/Research Centers/Facilities (NERA 3/13 and 7/13)
- Northeast Faculty Hiring Decisions (NERA 7/13)
- New Budget/Management Strategies for Dealing with Austerity (ESS 9/13)
- Emerging Needs for Agricultural Engineering Research or Tech Transfer in the NE (NERA 10/14)

- Open Architecture Laboratory Management (NERA 7/15)
- Identifying Gaps in Our Research and Extension Expertise for 21st Century Problems (NE 7/15)
- Meeting the Need for Future Leadership in Teaching, Research and Extension. (NE 7/15)
- An Experiment Station's Role in Helping to Drive Economic Development (NERA 3/16)
- Communications for Telling Our Research Story (NERA 3/16)
- Promoting diversity in our faculty, staff and graduate students (NERA 3/17)
- Social media, Federal policy and communicating in the digital age: a discussion (NERA 3/17)
- Reaching out to minority serving institutions (NERA 3/17)
- Communicating in the digital age: strategies for improving effectiveness (NEED/NERA 6/17)
- Tapping the source: new, novel streams of funding for agricultural research (ESS/SAES/ARD, 9/17)
- BIG DATA: Balancing impacts, investments and education (ESS/SAES/ARD, 9/17)
- The balance between a compliance mentality and an inclusive mindset (ESS/SAES/ARD, 9/17)
- The balance of university research and teaching (ESS/SAES/ARD, 9/17)
- New guidelines for Administrative Advisers – Old dogs, new tricks (NERA, 3/18)
- Managing millennials: new students, new staff, new faculty (NERA, 3/18)
- COVID19-How is it affecting our operations? (NERA Telecon, 3/20)
- Preparing for fall: Strategies for navigating the new normal (NERA Telecon, 6/20)
- COVID and Financial Workarounds (NERA Telecon, 10/20)
- All Things NIMSS (NERA Telecon, 2/21)
- Creating a Regional Voice: Impact Reporting and NIFA (NERA Telecom, 3/21)
- Research and Extension support for multistate projects (NEED/NERA Telecon, 6/21)
- Northeast Communications Network: Assets and Needs Assessment (NERA Telecon, 12/21)
- Nanotechnology and Agriculture: Sustainably Achieving Food Security (Station profile, NERA, 3/22)
- Northeastern Ecosystem Services Assessment Fellowship (NERA, 3/22)
- Civil Rights Reviews (NERA Telecon, 7/22)
- Agrivoltaics: A Win-Win for Agriculture? (Station profile, NERA, 9/22)
- Evolving Roles of Agricultural Experiment Stations at Cornell University (Station profile, NERA Telecon, 12/22)
- Appropriations, Farm Bill, and Research Infrastructure: An Insider's View (NERA, 3/23)
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect Plan: A Strategic Approach (Station profile, NERA, 3/23)

## **Potential**

- Flexible budget and resource allocation methods; i.e., historical, competitive, programmatic, etc.
- How we handle funds
- Hiring and supporting mid-level administrative leadership; i.e., department heads, research center directors, etc.
- State-level leadership in major research program areas; i.e., identifying & supporting faculty leaders, relationship with department heads & college administration, degree of administrative load, etc.

- Pesticide and toxic waste management on outlying research stations; i.e., compliance, disposal, personnel training, etc.
- Indirect cost recovery; i.e., commodity groups and state agency grants, use of college portion, etc.
- Developing integrated, interdisciplinary “centers of excellence”; i.e., establishment & funding, leadership, member vs. non-member, etc.
- Research faculty technical support; i.e., appropriate level, sharing technicians, partial salary, etc.
- Developing true multi-state partnerships in research
- Working with our commodity groups for funding research
- Encouraging a culture of publishing in peer-reviewed journals
- Ensuring research stands behind the extension recommendations, especially when the recommendations are referred to in state rules and policy
- Research websites and tying R, T, and E together
- Leading the local experiment station to actively initiate and engage in new initiatives
- Flexible research support for departments/units; i.e., new funding models, department/unit leaders help develop model
- Faculty performance expectations; i.e., publications, grants, teaching, etc.
- Hatch, McIntire-Stennis (MS), and internal competitive project review processes; i.e., new/renewed Hatch & M-S project review, internal RFPs, decision processes, etc.
- Ensuring laboratory security in university settings; i.e., compliance policies, access, oversight, etc.
- Decommissioning outlying stations; i.e., decision process, local public relations, stakeholder communication, faculty/staff reassignment, etc.
- Estimating the costs of managing and supporting greenhouse research and implementing greenhouse or bench charges; decision processes, transition, oversight, etc.
- Purchasing, maintaining and managing shared equipment; oversight, use scheduling, cost sharing, etc.
- Graduate student and post doc costs
- Open access and federal mandate for data archiving – who is doing what?
- Framing the NE region's position in likely future USDA water initiatives
- Crowd-funding as a means to raise money for research et al
- Aligning faculty hires with applied research and extension needs that experiment station directors identify
- Leading university-wide initiatives that complement station activities
- Dealing with NIFA
- Institutional strategic planning: lessons to be shared
- Discretionary funds to assist faculty: best practices
- Tactical strategies for allocation of formula funds
- Coping with university-wide spending reductions
- Armchair activism, ethics and social media
- Rewarding station scientists: tricks of the trade
- Merit, anti-merit and accountability: Dealing with HR and collective bargaining units
- Joint appointments: the good, the bad, and the ugly
- ICR: the cost of doing business
- Engaging faculty in AES activities
- Communications and outreach on AES activities

- Being an excellent Administrative Advisor
- Navigating the multistate system
- Best practices for integrating AES and CE activities
- Diversity and inclusion: continuing to build
- Professional developments opportunities that work
- Station evaluations: what to assess
- Budget models: What should we know about each other?
- Effective strategies for supporting grant-funded graduate students: stipend and tuition
- Leadership changes in motion: Awareness, preparation, response (Preparing for changes in leadership and conditions)