Project Overview

Agricultural Research Service
Office of National Programs Revitalization

BACKGROUND

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the United States Department of Agriculture’s chief scientific in-house research agency, conducting approximately 690 research projects across the country. ARS reorganized its approach to research project and program management in 1996 by breaking down disciplinary silos and taking a problem-centered approach to designing the research agenda. The resulting Office of National Programs has aligned and coordinated research projects across the country toward problems of high national or regional priority, making each project more effective, and leveraging the agency’s resources for greater impact.

The current organization of these programs largely reflects the reforms developed twenty years ago, and ARS is seeking recommendations to best position the programs to reflect changes since that time. ARS has engaged the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) to conduct an organizational assessment of its national research program structure and management process within its Office of National Programs. The goal of the study is to ensure that ARS’ line research programs are organized and managed to best deliver efficient, creative, and impactful mission-oriented work.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Academy’s assessment will specifically focus on:

- Benchmarking ARS program organization and management relative to other leading federal research agencies.
- Collecting informed external stakeholder views and views from leaders of ARS and its programs, as well as program staff, on directions for reforms and development.
- Developing recommendations for organizational reforms, based on documented findings, that warrant considerations by ARS.

The Academy has assembled an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to provide guidance to its professional study team. Information on the EAG and study team is provided on the next page.
Expert Advisory Group

Barry Bozeman*, Arizona Centennial Professor of Technology Policy and Public Management; Director, Center of Organizational Research and Design, Arizona State University. Former Ander Crenshaw Chair, Department of Public Administration and Policy, University of Georgia; Regents’ Professor of Public Policy, School of Public Policy and Director, Research Value Mapping Research Program, Georgia Institute of Technology; Director, Center for Technology and Information Policy, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and L.C. Smith College of Engineering, Syracuse University; Director, Doctoral Program in Public Administration, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

Sandra Archibald*, Dean and Professor, Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington. Former positions with Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota: Deputy Associate Dean; Interim Dean; Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research Programs; Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Development; Professor; Associate Professor; Adjunct Associate Professor; Associate Dean and Director of Graduate Studies. Former Assistant Professor of Applied Economics, Food Research Institute, Stanford University.

Mamie Parker*, Founder and President, Ma Parker and Associates. Former positions with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Head of Fisheries and Assistant Director, Headquarters, Northeast Regional Director; Chief of Staff, Headquarters, Deputy Geographic Assistant, Regional Director Atlanta, Georgia, Regional Environmental and Ecosystem Coordinator Minneapolis; Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Columbia, Missouri; Fishery Biologist, Lake Mills and Madison, Wisconsin; Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Green Bay, Wisconsin; Fishery Biologist Trainee, New London, Minnesota; Fishery Biologist Trainee, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

PROJECT STAFF
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