

A. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Area Administrative Office, Section. The incumbent is responsible for management oversight, administration, and execution of the Area's extramural research agreements program. Work encompasses all phases of pre-award and post-award activities including negotiation, award, administration, and close-out for a variety of complex (competitive and noncompetitive) extramural awards such as research support agreements, specific cooperative agreements, trust fund and reimbursable cooperative agreements, grants, assistance type cooperative agreements, and memoranda of understanding in support of the Area's extramural research program and/or extramural buildings and facilities construction projects.

B. MAJOR DUTIES

Reviews and analyzes proposed extramural projects to ensure there is legal authority to perform and enter into an agreement. Consults with Area program managers to obtain additional information and clarification. Makes a determination on the legal and fiscal requirements necessary to protect the agency's interests, and determines the appropriate award instrument based upon the principle purpose of the intended relationship, applicable Federal statutes, Departmental regulations, and ARS policy.

Develops and formulates contractual terms and conditions for each proposed extramural agreement award utilizing in-depth knowledge of various award instruments, applicable statutory requirements, and Area programmatic and management needs. Analyzes requirements to determine unique issues requiring programmatic and/or administrative clearances, modification(s) to standard award procedures, and development of unique terms and conditions of award to meet specialized requirements. Ensures all extramural agreements awarded in the Area are in compliance with applicable statutes, governing regulations, and agency policy.

Evaluates and analyzes programmatic and budgetary plans to ensure adequate resources are committed for successful completion of extramural projects. Is responsible for all final negotiations with cooperators and/or grant recipients which may involve complex issues dealing with ARS and cooperator rights to intellectual properties, the adequacy of liability and insurance coverage, funding arrangements and payment schedules, changes in key personnel, budget revisions, allocable costs, prior approvals, suspension and termination clauses, etc. Has final approval to commit agency resources and obligate funds, at an unlimited dollar amount for extramural agreements within the Area.

Determines appropriate functions and responsibilities for ARS's technical representatives(s) for each extramural award based upon the specific programmatic and administrative requirements unique to each agreement. Provides written delegations of authority to Authorized Departmental

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GS-1101-11**

Standard Job #1101-11

Officer's Designated Representative (ADODR) to ensure appropriate technical oversight of extramural projects is conducted and performed in accordance with agency expectations and is consistent with the terms and conditions of the award. Takes proactive measures to ensure extramural agreement deliverables are received in accordance with the terms of the award.

Performs liaison activities between ARS offices and the Office of the General Counsel, Office of Inspector General, other Department staff offices, and other Government agencies as appropriate for clearing or obtaining decisions and opinions regarding the legality of extramural agreements. Has full responsibility for assuring compliance on all extramural agreement matters, and final decision on resolving noncompliance issues, with the exception of those issues which must be adjudicated by the ARS Administrator or the REE Chief Financial Officer.

Provides technical advice and assistance to the Area's program staff and field location offices as well as non-Federal entities regarding ARS extramural agreement authorities, types and proposes a wide range of agreement instruments, and pre-award and post-award actions required to initiate and or close-out an extramural agreement activity. Provides support and assistance to the Area's management units in solving a variety of extramural agreement issues and problems, including those requiring significant departures from traditional approaches.

Develops, coordinates, and conducts training for Area Director's staff, Location Administrative Officers and their staffs, and both Federal and non-Federal scientific communities in applying new or revised Agency, Department, and Government-wide policies and procedures pertaining to extramural agreements.

Develops and implements Area-wide procedures to supplement existing directives to meet unique management requirements of the Area's extramural agreements function. Consults with Area customers and managers to identify developing trends and gaps in policies, procedures, and operational deficiencies. Recommends alternative solutions to inefficient operations impacting delivery of extramural agreements service in the Area.

Interprets OMB and Departmental guidance concerning extramural agreements and extrapolates portions pertinent to ARS operations. Participates in the conduct of management reviews of location extramural agreement functions to assure conformance with policies, to provide guidance in problems associated with implementing extramural agreement programs, and to promote efficient and effective operations.

Participates in meetings, conferences and work groups as designated to disseminate information prudent to agreement policies and procedures and/or to assist with managerial problem-solving activities.

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Maintains the agency's official files for all Area extramural agreements. Utilizes the Agriculture Research Information System (ARIS) and the Research Agreements Tracking System (RATS). Maintains ARIS actions on all sibling CRIS' related to the implementation and administration of cooperative agreements.

Provides advice to Area personnel in matters involving budget and fiscal, procurement, property, safety and health, buildings and facilities construction projects relative to extramural agreements. Serves as a resource and official point of contact for the Area's cooperators providing expert advice and guidance in administrative matters. Advice and procedures are furnished to determine minimum steps to be taken to ensure compliance with governing statutes and regulations.

Reviews Area ARMPS submissions; provides advice to the Area Director, Area Administrative Officer, Area Budget and Fiscal Officer, the Location Coordinator, and the Location Administrative Officer on the feasibility of proposed extramural projects and the administrative requirements for successful project completion.

Assists in identifying opportunities for ADP applications for the extramural agreements function within the Area and ARS nationwide. Serves as the functional specialist and liaison to technical specialists during software development, improvement, etc.

C. Evaluation Factors

1. Knowledge Required By the Position (FL 1-7: 1,250 pts)

Knowledge of the Federal statutes and Government-wide policies, Federal and Departmental rules and regulations, principles, practices, and concepts related to extramural agreements program.

Knowledge of Federal contractual and assistance policies, procedures, and requirements in order to evaluate a wide variety of extramural agreements and to determine their applicability to coverage under formal contract administration.

General familiarity with related functional areas such as acquisition, property, records, ADP/information processing, and budget and fiscal management. Extramural agreements interface with all these functional areas and consideration of their functional requirements is required when formulating any extramural agreements.

Skill in formulating unique agreement documents that are technically sound and are in compliance with available policy and law.

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Ability to apply cost accounting standards and related financial operating practices in order to develop financial accountability controls for monitoring extramural agreements.

Ability to write effectively so agreements, memoranda, letters, and reports accurately present findings on a wide range of assistance-related topics.
Skill in the use of negotiation techniques to negotiate agreement terms/conditions and changes to existing agreements.

Ability to communicate effectively with individuals and groups inside and outside of the Federal sector.

2. Supervisory Controls

(FL 2-4: 450 pts)

The incumbent works under the administrative guidance of the _____.
Assignments are given in terms of general objectives and functional goals. The incumbent is the technical authority for extramural agreements in the Area and is expected to carry out and complete all projects independently and to keep the supervisor informed of any matter which is potentially controversial.

The incumbent is responsible for planning and implementing assignments and for exercising judgment to resolve procedural and technical problems. The incumbent interprets policies on own initiative based upon experience in the assistance area.

Work is reviewed primarily for results achieved. The method used in arriving at the end results are not reviewed in detail.

3. Guidelines

(FL 3-3: 275 pts)

Guidelines include public laws, legislative committee reports, GAO decision, Executive Branch policy and administrative guidance, other Executive Agency regulations, Departmental regulation and decisions, Judicial Branch decisions and orders, proposed legislation and regulations, and current policies and procedures.

Incumbent must exercise judgment and ingenuity in applying these guidelines. Because of the unique authority ARS establishes and administers its extramural agreements, these may not always be applicable thus requiring incumbent to adapt or, based upon knowledge and expertise, recommend alternatives within available resources.

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4. Complexity

(FL 4-4, 225 pts)

Incumbent is required to perform duties involving program administration, providing technical expertise to a diverse population of Federal Government officials, as well as non-Federal officials with different and often countering viewpoints and positions.

Incumbent develops innovative and creative solutions to technical or managerial issues and exercises initiative, originality, and sound judgment which require interaction with funds management, property management, safety and health concerns, personnel consideration, and negotiation skills to implement alternatives to existing clauses, regulation, procedures, etc.

A complex variety of methods, function, projects, programs, and tasks (gathering, analyzing, negotiating, developing, awarding, administering) are required to efficiently, effectively and successfully manage the program.

5. Scope and Effect

(FL 5-3: 150 pts)

The needs of ARS, its partner agencies, and the Department cannot be met without the use of the resources of the non-Federal sector.

The incumbent's work results in the Area being able to use the resources of non-Federal sources and thus contributes toward the accomplishment of the Agency's program missions.

6. Personal Contacts

(FL 6-3: 60 pts)

Contacts are with individuals representing USDA, ARS, other Federal organizations, state and local agencies and governments, as well as officials in the private and corporate arena.

7. Purpose of Contacts

(FL 7-3: 120 pts)

Contacts are for the purpose of providing, requesting, or exchanging information to resolve problems, to provide service, as well as to justify, negotiate, or settle issues concerning agreement activities, and defend management decisions.

8. Physical Demands

(FL 8-1: 5 pts)

Work is sedentary; however, some walking, standing and bending are required.

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9. Work Environment

(FL 9-1: 5 pts)

Work is usually performed in an office setting; however, reviews require visits to sites where programs are conducted.

TOTAL POINTS: 2,420

GRADE CONVERSION: GS-11 = 2,355 – 2,750 pts

January 28, 1999