

**Desert Southwest
Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

Addition of New Partners Protocol

I. SUMMARY

The Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (DSCESU) Executive Committee herein delineates the policies pertaining to the application process for admission of additional organizations into membership in the DSCESU. The fundamental feature of these policies is that candidate organizations will be evaluated using steps similar to those used when the founding membership was defined. The Executive Committee will base its decisions on application materials and an interview. The addition of a new federal agency, or a new partner institution, must be approved by a unanimous vote of the DSCESU Executive Committee members participating at an official meeting. Consistent with Article III.C. of the DSCESU Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement, new members will be added through an amendment to the agreement. And, "Amendments shall be in writing, signed and agreed to by all signatories to this agreement."

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

Prospective member organizations, whether solicited or unsolicited, are required to provide the appropriate application materials described below. Based on review of these materials, the Executive Committee will determine whether or not to proceed with the interview stage of the admission process.

A. APPLICATION MATERIALS

1. A federal agency seeking membership must submit to the Host University a letter of interest stating that their agency is a current member of the CESU Council, and that they are prepared to fulfill their responsibilities as a federal agency member of the DSCESU, including payment of the one-time assessment of \$10,000 to the Host University.
2. An organization seeking membership as a partner institution must submit to the Host University a letter of interest confirming that they have reviewed the general CESU descriptive materials and DSCESU Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement (Agreement), and that they agree to abide by all of the responsibilities and expectations of partner institutions.
 - a) In addition, a prospective new academic partner institution must submit a written response to the ten (10) elements listed in the original "Program Announcement and Request for Proposals for Establishing a Second Round of Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units" (15 September 1999). The ten elements are:
 - 1) a contact person, along with their title, address, phone number, fax and e-mail address,
 - 2) a list of programs relevant to federal land management, environmental and research agencies, including the degrees offered and number of graduate students in each program,

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Addition of New Partners Protocol**

- 3) a list and brief description of faculty with expertise in disciplines and interdisciplinary work relevant to federal land management, environmental and research agencies (do not submit vitae),
- 4) a list and brief description of relevant facilities and equipment,
- 5) a list and brief description of relevant experience in research, education and technical assistance linked to CESU Network objectives (such as previous grants, special projects awards and so forth),
- 6) a list and description of current formal and informal relationships with federal land management, environmental and research agencies,
- 7) a description of services to be provided to the participating federal agencies and federal employee(s) by the university,
- 8) a description of the actual, assessed overhead rate (not to exceed 17.5%) to be charged and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU, including research, educational and technical assistance services,
- 9) a description of administrative support, including the ability (and administrative charges, if any) to transfer, subcontract and receive funds between CESU partners and through the national CESU Network, and
- 10) staff, faculty time, educational services and other commitments the university wishes to offer the CESU, including the amount, kind, dollar value and duration of assistantships, work-study funds, clerical support, and so forth.

A non-academic partner institution applicant should submit, in addition to the letter of interest, a written response to the three (3) elements listed in the original "Program Announcement and Request for Proposals for Establishing a Second Round of Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units" (15 September 1999). The three elements are:

- 1) a contact person, along with their title, address, phone number, fax and e-mail address,
 - 2) a brief description of research, educational and technical assistance services to be offered to federal land management, environmental and research agencies, and
 - 3) other information relevant to CESU Network objectives.
3. After receipt of these materials, the Executive Committee will consider the nomination.

B) INTERVIEW

All Executive Committee members are invited to participate in the application review process. If greater than 50% of the Executive Committee members agree that the nomination appears to have merit, an invitation will be extended to the appropriate official to attend the next Executive Committee meeting. This meeting is required. It provides an opportunity for the proposed new member to make a presentation to the committee addressing components of their Application Materials in Section II.A. above. The committee is free to ask additional relevant questions as well as answer any questions that the proposed new partner may have.

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Addition of New Partners Protocol**

III. ADMISSION DECISIONS

A quorum of greater than 50% of the Executive Committee membership must participate in order to conduct official DSCESU business. The Executive Committee will discuss the merits of the proposal and put the nomination to a vote. Federal agency nominees and partner institution nominees are elected to membership by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee members participating at an official meeting. For successful applicants, the National CESU Council will write the amendment and negotiate phrasing within the amendment. This amendment will be signed and agreed to by all signatories to the Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement. It is the responsibility of the Host University to obtain signatures of all partner and non-governmental organizations; the National Council will obtain signatures from the federal partners. All partners are allowed 45 days to sign. If partners do not sign within this time frame the amendment is finalized without them. Following the Council's approval of the amendment, the Host University will issue a formal letter of acceptance welcoming the new partner, and distribute the amended agreement to all DSCESU member organizations.