



April 11, 2023

Dr. Jeanette Thurston  
NCRA Executive Director  
228D Waters Hall  
1603 Old Campus Drive  
Manhattan, KS 66506

Dear Director Thurston,

I am writing this letter in support of forming a North Central Development Committee (NCDC – Regular) for the proposed multistate project entitled, *“Integrating Team Science into Science Communication.”* Dr. Joy Rumble in the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication would be Ohio State’s representative on this committee.

This NCDC will address the growing need to use team science approaches to solve complex problems in agricultural, food, and natural resources (AFNR) sciences by integrating AFNR science communication faculty in team science projects. The call for using interdisciplinary approaches to address complex challenges in society has increased in recent years, and funding agencies are now expecting, if not requiring, a team science approach for proposal submissions. However, policies, culture, and structure to support effective team science remain lacking in higher education. This committee is proposing a multistate research activity to create a strategic structure and culture that prepares and enables AFNR science communication faculty to provide science communication research and expertise to team science projects. Providing needed expertise and research to interdisciplinary teams, while also putting a mechanism in place to elevate the communication and engagement practices of all scientists, will increase dissemination and impact of scientific progress, thus leading to an increase in science literacy.

The team forming this committee has done an excellent job outlining the background and need for this project, which is backed by their expertise and engagement in scholarly activity related to science communication. Additionally, this team of collaborators has first-hand experience working on team science projects and grants, making it uniquely qualified to lead these efforts for the North Central region and beyond. While other multistate projects have focused on agricultural literacy (W3006) or efforts to advance agricultural communication (S\_Temp1095), there are currently no existing efforts to strategically enhance team science through interdisciplinary collaboration with AFNR science communication faculty. This proposal is a critical first step to improve team science efforts and address complex issues in science while fostering science literacy amongst the public.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Gary Pierzynski  
Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education  
Director, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station