

ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

Policies and Procedures

Title: Acceptance of Non-Federal Awards and Recognition

Number: 468.5

Date: August 10, 1998

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Employee Relations Branch, AFM/ARS

This Replaces: ARS 468.5 dated 9/01/88

Distribution: All REE Employees

This P&P provides policy and procedures regarding the acceptance of non-Federal awards and recognitions.

Table Of Contents

1.	References	3
2.	Authority	3
3.	Policy	3
4.	Summary of Responsibilities	4
5.	Glossary	5
	Exhibit 1	6

1. References

All non-Federal awards are subject to the review process contained in this P&P. For further information regarding agency-announced non-Federal awards and recognitions, refer to P&P 468.7.

For the receipt of awards and recognitions from any unit of foreign governmental authority, including any foreign National, State, local, and municipal government, or from any international or multinational organization whose membership is composed of any unit of foreign government; and any agency or representative of any unit or organization, refer to P&P 468.4.

For additional information on non-Federal award/gift acceptance and conflict-of-interest considerations, see the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, Subpart B -- Gifts from Outside Sources.

2. Authority

Executive Order 12674, as modified by Executive Order 12731

3. Policy

It is the policy of REE to foster interest in non-Federal awards and recognitions and to recognize those employees who have been rewarded. Supervisors, managers, and employees are encouraged to participate in the non-Federal awards process. Employees, who are recipients of such awards or who are nominated, must avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest in the conduct of official duties. Employees may accept awards and recognitions, other than cash or an investment interest, with an aggregate market value of \$200 or less in certain situations. These situations include presentation as a legitimate award or incident to a legitimate award that is given for (a) meritorious public service, (b) achievement by a person who does not have interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duties, or (c) by an association or other organization consisting of prohibited sources. Awards given in the above situations **do not require** formal review by an agency ethics official. However, gifts given in connection with awards and recognitions with an aggregate market value in excess of \$200 and awards of cash or investment interests, such as bonds or stocks, **do require** formal review by an agency ethics official.

NOTE: Occasionally, funding for an award is provided by a prohibited source. Acceptance of these awards may meet compliance mandates when the ethics official finds the awardee is selected by an independent panel and the prohibited source relinquishes any authority in the selection process.

4. Summary of Responsibilities

If a gift will be given in connection with (a) an award or recognition with an aggregate market value exceeding \$200, or (b) an award of cash or investment interest (regardless of the dollar amount):

REE Awardee will:

- **Prior to award acceptance**, submit a completed Non-Federal Award Recipient Request (Form) to their Manager/Designated Area Ethics Advisor (DAEA) for review and determination for acceptance (see Exhibit 1). (The agency nominator or the awardee's immediate supervisor will complete forms for awards nominated and not announced to the awardee.)

Immediate Supervisor will:

- Assure all portions of the form are completed.
- Forward the form to the Manager/DAEA with a recommendation for approval or disapproval of award acceptance.

Manager/DAEA will:

- Encourage supervisors and employees to keep abreast of non-Federal awards and recognitions and nominate eligible candidates.
- Review the completed form and approve/disapprove award acceptance based on a conflict-of-interest review.
- Forward the form to the Science Ethics Branch in the USDA Office of Ethics.

Science Ethics Branch will:

- Review the completed form and concur/nonconcur with the determination of Manager/DAEA.
- Retain one copy of the form in the awardee's ethics file and one in the Ethics Office master awards file.
- Return the original form to the Manager/DAEA.

5. Glossary

DAEA. ARS Designated Area Ethics Advisor (only applies to ARS). These individuals are Ethics Advisors who are responsible for administering the Ethics program within their Area. “Managers” provide this function for all other REE agencies.

Foreign Government. Any unit of foreign governmental authority, including any foreign National, State, local, and municipal government. Any international or multinational organization whose membership is composed of any unit of foreign government and any agency or representative of any such unit or organization.

Gift. Any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value which is given in connection with an award or recognition. It includes services as well as gifts of training, transportation, local travel, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.

Investment Interests. Stocks, bonds, and other investments.

Managers. REE Staff Officers/Directors and Division Directors.

Non-Federal Awards and Recognitions. Awards and recognitions granted by non-Federal entities such as professional, technical or trade groups, associations, or private foundations.

Prohibited Source. Any person who:

- is seeking official action by the employee’s agency;
- does business or seeks to do business with the employee’s agency;
- has interests that may be substantially affected by performance or non-performance of the employee’s official duties; or
- belongs to an organization where a majority of members, as described above, are **prohibited sources**.

/s/

W. G. HORNER
Deputy Administrator
Administrative and Financial Management

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO ACCEPT AN AWARD FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE		
(Provide all attachments from awarding organization and use supplemental sheets, if necessary)		
Name of Awardee	Agency/Area/Region/Division/Location	
Name of Awarding Organization		
Purpose/Mission of Organization		
Name of Award and Value \$ _____		
Is the organization : (circle one)	Profit making	Nonprofit/Professional
Who are the members of the Organization?		
Are they prohibited sources? (Use definition at 5 CFR 2635.203(d)) (circle one)	YES	NO
Is this an established awards program? (circle one)	YES	NO
How is this award funded (where does the money come from)?		
If the award is funded by private industry, do they have authority to approve or disapprove receipt of award?		
Are other than Federal employees eligible? (circle one)	YES	NO
Who is eligible to nominate candidates?		
What are the nominating procedures?		
Are the selection standards in writing? (If so, please provide a copy) (circle one)	YES	NO
Who is on the selection panel, and who appoints them?		
Is the selection panel a one or two-tier system?		
Who makes the final decision?		

ETHICS ADVISOR REVIEW:

<input type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL <input type="checkbox"/> DISAPPROVAL	
Signature of Designated Area/Agency Ethics Advisor:	Date:

CONCURRENCE:	
Signature of Science Ethics Branch Advisor:	Date: