

**ECOP Processes and Principles**

1. ***Identifying ECOP Priorities***

**Purpose:** To convey the processes and principles by which ECOP identifies Cooperative Extension Section (CES) priorities and to determine where ECOP leaders will focus their time and attention.

* **What are ECOP Priorities?**
  + ECOP priorities are those few topics/issues that receive heightened attention and perhaps resources. Priorities are identified annually, prior to the start of a ECOP Chair’s term. On very rare occasions, a priority may surface off-cycle.
    - Priorities could be related to program, budget, or policy.
    - Heightened attention can take the form of targeted advocacy, formation of a task force or committee, allocation from the ECOP Strategic Priorities budget line, or other partnership and resource assistance.
* **Criteria for Determining ECOP Priorities**
  + Priorities fall under one of the ECOP Standing Committees who own the work.\*

**Examples:**

* + - For a programmatic priority: A new/emerging national-level program priority is submitted to the ECOP Program Committee for review, vetting, and if endorsed, presented by the Program Committee to the ECOP Executive Committee for consideration during the June Executive Committee Meeting. Upon consideration, the Executive Committee can recommend review by ECOP, or provide guidance for further development of the idea.
    - For a budget priority: A new/emerging budget priority proposal is submitted to the ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee for review, vetting, and if endorsed, presented during the June Executive Committee Meeting by the BLC to the ECOP Executive Committee and/or ECOP for review/consideration/approval.
    - For policy priorities: A policy priority proposal is submitted to the ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee for review, vetting, and if endorsed, presented during the June Executive Committee Meeting by the BLC to the ECOP Executive Committee and/or ECOP for review/consideration/approval.
    - On rare occasions, the ECOP Chair, along with the ECOP Executive Committee will appoint a special committee as an ownership group.
  + Priorities must fit within the structure of ECOP to ensure that proposed ideas and projects are manageable.
* **Process for Becoming an ECOP Priority**

1. An annual review of existing priorities will be conducted by the ECOP Executive Committee in June.
2. ECOP Standing Committees, or two or more Regions (through ECOP Standing Committees) can bring forward a priority proposal to be considered by the ECOP Executive Committee (during the June ECOP Executive Committee Meeting). **Proposals are due to the ECOP National Office Executive Director by May 31st.** 
   * + The proposed priority can be programmatic, budget, or policy related.
     + Proposed priorities are identified by ECOP Standing Committees or Regions as important, relevant, and timely.
     + Proposal leaders should reflect the intent of their constituency and not just individual thoughts and wishes.
     + Proposals may consider opportunities to maintain, incorporate, or advance current efforts.
     + The proposed priority addresses an emerging need.
     + The proposal clearly states the intended outcomes and measures of success, any budgetary needs, duration for the priority, and a method to sunset or transition the work.
3. The ECOP Executive Committee evaluates proposal(s) and votes on which ones will move on to full ECOP for a vote.
   * An overview of existing priorities will be presented at NEDA, annually.
     + Identification of proposed priorities and associated terms will be presented and considered for approval at NEDA, annually.
     + Annual priorities will be finalized during NEDA.
     + New proposals not identified as annual priorities may be reconsidered in a future year or may be vetted through the appropriate ECOP Standing Committee for future consideration to advance the work and intent of the proposal.
     + Existing priorities are expected to develop sustainable and standalone qualities that allow them to continue without direct ECOP funding, in that the work: 1) was accomplished, 2) found sustainability through grants and/or funding and a leadership structure; 3) is represented within an ECOP Standing Committee; (4) has earned independent standing or coordinating committee (i.e. Crop Protection Program); (5) has transferred to a new owner; JCEP, for example, if the work was related to professional development.

\*Teams working on specific efforts within ECOP Standing Committees (Program Committee PATs for example), including liaisons from partnering groups, work within the appropriate ECOP Standing Committees structures and processes to bring issues and opportunities to the ECOP membership.

1. ***Identifying New ECOP Partners and Funders***

**Purpose:** To convey the processes and principles by which ECOP identifies new partnerships and funding opportunities to determine where ECOP leaders will focus their time and attention. New partnership and funding opportunities can arise at any time during the fiscal year.

* **Who Currently Makes Requests to ECOP for System-Wide Partnerships and New Funding Opportunities?**
  + Extension Deans/Directors
  + Extension Foundation
  + Federal Agencies
  + National Organizations
  + Industry
  + Legislators
  + Private Foundations
  + National 4-H Council
* **Criteria for Determining New ECOP Partnerships and Funding Opportunities**
  + Opportunity is a current ECOP priority.
  + Opportunity supports the entire system.
  + Potential for new or increased system-wide funding.
  + Clear objectives and evaluation plan.
  + Timeline? A one-time opportunity or long-term partnership.
  + Institutional leadership support from Extension Dean/Directors/Administrators.

**Examples:**

* Federal Agency approaches Director/Dean/Administrator with a funding/partnership opportunity for the system.
  + - CDC/Excite Program
* **Process for Making the Decision on a New Partner or Funder of ECOP** 
  + Opportunities for partnerships arise at any time in the fiscal year.
  + An annual review of existing partners and funder will be conducted by the ECOP Executive Committee in June.
  + All new requests for a partnership or funders must be submitted to the National Extension Office.
    - Request will be logged into a tracking system.
    - ECOP Chair will determine when/where to direct the request.
      * ECOP Standing Committees
      * Program Action Team
      * ECOP Executive Team
      * ECOP
      * CES
* **Timing for Making the Decision on a New Partner or Funder of ECOP** 
  + Timing is not as important as the process.
  + Requests can be made any time and should follow the process outlined above.
* **Process for Making the Decision on a New Partner or Funder of ECOP** 
  + The request is submitted to the National Extension Office.
  + National Office discusses the request with ECOP Chair and determines the next steps and review if needed.
  + Request is reviewed by ECOP Executive Committee and moved to ECOP if needed.
  + Final approval and vote will be taken at the CES level.