4. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

PEER REVIEW PROCESS and CRITERIA

1. All applications will undergo a rigorous review process, which will include a technical peer review by scientists working in the appropriate fields. Proposals will also undergo review by the Sun Grant Advisory Committee (AC) before being accepted for funding and forwarding to USDA for final funding approval. Decisions will be made on the basis of the following factors:

- **Scientific and Technical Merit (50%)**
  - Originality and innovativeness of the concept and approach
  - Conceptual adequacy of research, as applicable
  - Clarity of objectives and presentation of information
  - Adequacy of methodology proposed
  - Feasibility of methodology to achieve objectives
  - Likelihood of success as proposed

- **Qualifications of the Investigator(s), Adequacy of Facilities, Project Management, and Costs (25%)**
  - Awareness of previous work or strategies
  - Appropriate expertise or collaborators included
  - Level to which stakeholders were involved in project planning and implementation
  - Planning and implementation strategies
  - Adequate outreach program and strategies

- **Project Relevance (25%)**
  - Appropriateness of the proposal in addressing Sun Grant’s mission and the research priorities of the region
  - Relevance to USDA strategic areas of interest
  - Degree to which there is potential for project implementation, adoption and impact

2. A panel of experts will be assembled for the technical peer review. A lead panelist in each of the subfields is identified and tasked with leading the discussion on that set of proposals. A secondary reviewer is also identified to present additional information. The full panel will provide input on the technical merits of the proposal. The full list of prioritized proposals is submitted to the SGW Advisory Committee for a programmatic review.
PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

The Advisory Committee will review the list of recommended projects and evaluate them against their relevance to the priority needs of the region. The SGW will seek to achieve a portfolio of research and education projects to address the bioenergy development priorities of the region. Therefore, relevance to meeting the priority needs of the region may form the basis for selection among projects deemed of equivalent merit and quality. The Advisory Committee will recommend a short list of priority projects to the SGW directors and USDA for their funding consideration.