EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

COOPERATIVE INSTITUTE FOR SEVERE AND HIGH-IMPACT WEATHER RESEARCH AND OPERATIONS

CIWRO

The Coopertive Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather Research and Operations (CI-WRO) is a NOAA Cooperative Institute at the University of the Oklahoma. Printed and digital versions of this handbook were published in Spring 2025 by the University of Oklahoma..

Cover photo: CIWRO researchers collect data in the TORUS field campaign in Gordon, NE, on June 6, 2022. Photo by Mike Coniglio, NOAA NSSL.

OUR MISSION

The mission of CIWRO is to foster collaborative research between CIWRO scientists and NOAA partners on issues of shared interest, aiming to enhance the understanding of weather phenomena. By transitioning research findings into operational products, CIWRO seeks to improve weather forecasts and warnings, ultimately saving lives, protecting property, and reducing the economic impacts of storms.

The research at CIWRO focuses on advancing fundamental knowledge of weather radar, multi-scale processes, and sub-seasonal to seasonal predictions. The transition of products to operations supports faster, more accurate, and valuable weather and water information, guiding decision-making to minimize loss of life, injury, and economic damage. Critical to CIWRO's success are the integration of improved observations, modeling, data assimilation (DA), and the study of social and socioeconomic impacts of high-impact weather. Both research-to-operations (R2O) and operations-to-research (O2R) processes play a key role in driving this mission.

Education, outreach, and training are vital components of CIWRO's efforts, building capacity to support NOAA's future research and operational activities. CIWRO's scientific mission is carried out through five key research themes:

1. Weather radar and observational R&D,
2. Mesoscale and stormscale modeling R&D,
3. Forecast applications improvements R&D,
4. Subseasonal to seasonal (S2S) prediction for extreme weather events, and
5. Social and socioeconomic impacts of high-impact weather systems.

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MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Management of CIWRO employees follows a tiered structure so that all employees are directly supervised by another CIWRO employee who is familiar with their day-to-day work. Because of the size of CIWRO, several layers of management are required so that all employees are able to be effectively supervised and evaluated in accordance with OU policies.

CIWRO EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

There are four members of the CIWRO executive team:
- Director: Dr. Greg McFarquhar
- Associate Director: Dr. Randy Peppler
- Assistant Director: Dr. Sebastián Torres
- Executive Director of Finance and Operations: Ms. Cassandra Eads

The Director has the ultimate responsibility and authority for the optimum functioning of CIWRO, serves as the main point of contact with the OU administration, and collaborates with the OU administration and college leadership as appropriate. Members of the executive team manage CIWRO's finances, make decisions of employee actions such as hiring, discipline, and termination, oversee performance evaluation and promotions, coordinate with federal partners, and ensure the scientific integrity of the research performed at CIWRO.

UNIT/BRANCH DIRECTORS

Division/Branch directors are appointed to provide additional coordination among the CIWRO teams in a NOAA unit or branch. Unit/branch directors oversee activities within their unit/branch, ensuring that project goals and priorities are being properly addressed, manage one or more projects (including research priorities and budgets), and coordinate with CIWRO leadership and federal counterparts (e.g., federal branch directors and program leads) on scientific direction. Unit/branch directors supervise and provide administrative support to team leads within their unit/branch.

TEAM LEADS

Every team in CIWRO has a CIWRO team lead. Team leads supervise and provide scientific/technical and administrative support for the employees in their teams. Team leads are responsible for developing and updating performance plans and for employee tasking. Team leads are also responsible for identifying workforce needs, serving as chairs (or appointing a chair) of search committees for new positions in their team, conducting performance appraisals for employees in their team, providing opportunities for employee professional development, addressing performance issues, and recommending promotion actions. They are also responsible for day-to-day administrative approvals including requests for travel, requests for time off, requests for situational remote work, scheduled remote Performance plans, and time sheets.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

CIWRO has an administrative support team that includes

- Human resources specialist: Ms. Tanya Riley
- Accounting for grants and projects: Mr. John Guin
- Purchasing: Ms. Jami Foucher
- Media and outreach: Ms. Annette Price
- Assistant to the Director and overall office coordination: Ms. Mandi Campbell.

ROLE OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES IN CIWRO PROCESSES

The unique partnership between CIWRO and federal agencies can sometimes lead to confusion on who employees should consult in the event of a problem or for advising. Scientific/technical advising can come from a federal technical advisor or CIWRO team leads. However, only CIWRO team leads can formally task CIWRO employees. Performance and administrative processes are addressed only by CIWRO team leads.

CIWRO VISION

The scientific vision of CIWRO is to be a global leader in severe and high-impact weather research, bridging partnerships between the University of Oklahoma, NOAA, and consortium institutions to transform scientific understanding into innovative, life-saving forecasts that reduce the impacts of extreme weather on communities and ecosystems.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

POSITIONS

POSITION TYPES

There are four different types of positions at CIWRO:

- Student employees: This includes both undergraduate and graduate research assistants (referred to as UGRA and GRA, respectively). These are fixed-term positions that end either when the student graduates or when the funding ends, whichever comes first.

- Postdoctoral Research Scientists: These are also fixed-term positions that have a maximum duration of 3 years or when the funding ends, whichever comes first. This position requires a PhD.

- Research Associates (RA): These are career-track positions focused on conducting and advancing research activities, with eligibility for promotion. These roles typically require a minimum of a Master's degree or a Bachelor's degree with equivalent experience.

- Research Scientists (RS): These are career-track positions focused on developing and directing research initiatives in lead scientific roles, with eligibility for promotion. These roles typically require a minimum of a Ph.D. or a Master's degree with equivalent experience.

POSITION LEVELS

Career-track positions at CIWRO (i.e., Research Associates and Research Scientists), are organized into four promotion levels:

Level 1: This entry-level position typically spans the first 3-4 years of postgraduate experience. Level 1 employees focus on consistently executing foundational job functions. RA1s generally contribute under the guidance of others, while RS1s are expected to lead their own project initiatives.

Level 2: Employees at Level 2 generally have 4-9 years of postgraduate experience and may still be considered early-career. Level 2 employees play a key role in their team's success. RA2s perform their duties with moderate or limited oversight, while RS2s are expected to operate independently and contribute significantly to major thematic projects within their team.

Level 3: Level 3 employees usually have over 9 years of postgraduate experience and are considered mid-career. At this level, employees make substantial contributions to the success of their division or branch through leadership, management, and service activities. RA3s primarily respond to directives from senior leaders, whereas RS3s undertake these responsibilities with considerable initiative.

Senior Level: Senior-level employees typically possess more than 16 years of postgraduate experience. They play an increasingly vital role in advancing the organization's success, focusing on impactful management, leadership, and service activities. Senior RAs generally work in response to directives from senior leadership, while Senior RSs lead these activities independently, demonstrating substantial influence.

POSITION CATEGORIES

Career-track positions at CIWRO (i.e., Research Associates and Research Scientists), are organized into three categories. Positions are categorized based on the position description rather than the employee's degree.

CIWRO research meteorologists (hereafter referred to as "meteorologists") is a broad category that covers researchers who are working in the fields of meteorology, geography, social-science, or equivalent areas. Employees in this category generally have post-secondary degrees in one of the above areas or a related field, including data science, civil engineering, and environmental engineering. In general, employees performing meteorological research, providing or generating data in support of meteorological research, or evaluating how meteorological information is used by others fall into this category.

CIWRO research engineers (hereafter referred to as "engineers") are responsible for the innovation and development of new products, services, technologies, and processes in support of the CIWRO mission. CIWRO engineers also work with scientists in CIWRO and NOAA to understand the research problems they face, and to develop engineering solutions in support of that research. Employees in this category have a post-secondary degree in an engineering field or equivalent experience. Employees with engineering degrees may not be classified as CIWRO engineers if their position does not require work in the general field of engineering.

CIWRO research software developers (hereafter referred to as "developers") work with scientists and engineers in CIWRO and NOAA to understand the research problems they face, and to develop, maintain, and extend software to provide the answers to these problems. CIWRO classifies employees as developers if the majority of their job duties involve the development of research software in support of the CIWRO mission. While many meteorologists and engineers in CIWRO write software in support of their own research, software developers are unique in that they write software that supports the research of others. This research software typically runs in real time and is directly transitioned to or implemented in systems that support the research mission of CIWRO and/or the research and operational missions of NOAA. Employees in this category also have formal college-level training or equivalent demonstrated experience using computer-science concepts.

PERFORMANCE PLANS

PURPOSE

Performance plans set the minimum expectations for employees, clarifying their roles and responsibilities. These plans outline standards for performance and behavior, forming the basis for performance evaluations. Meeting all criteria within a performance plan indicates that an employee is fulfilling the essential requirements of their role. However, performance plans are not designed to encompass every task an employee may undertake and should not be seen as restrictive. Employees who meet the core expectations of their role are encouraged to participate in additional relevant activities beyond what is documented in their performance plan.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

CIWRO Research Scientists and Research Associates focus on five primary types of activities. Since performance plans outline the minimum expectations for each role, certain activities may or may not be appropriate to include, depending on the employee's position type, level, and category. Conversely, specific activities may be required for some roles. In performance plans, team leads should assign a point weighting to each activity, indicating the extent to which each one will impact the employee's overall performance assessment. The five types of activities allowed in CIWRO performance plans are described next.

- **Scientific/Engineering R&D:** This involves the development of new knowledge, methods, and technologies, as well as the enhancement of existing ones, through systematic research and innovative approaches. This process encompasses discovering, designing, testing, and refining solutions to address scientific, technological, and societal challenges. This includes most conventional R&D activities as well as testbed evaluations, development of software for research purposes, and the development/maintenance of experimental real-time systems.
- **Research Transition:** This encompasses the activities necessary to ensure that developed products, technologies, or knowledge are effectively transferred and integrated into the receiving entity's operations, enabling successful deployment and use. Activities under this element are related to the final transition of research; they do not include testbed activities or development/maintenance of experimental real-time systems.

- **Professional Development:** This is defined as initiatives aimed at enhancing the skills, knowledge, and career growth of the employee and others, fostering continuous improvement and expertise within the organization. All employees are required to have Professional Development Activities included in their performance plans. Typically, the point weighting for this activity should not exceed 10%.
  - Mentorship of junior colleagues is defined as investing in someone's career development, but not necessarily in their science. There are no formal expectations that the relationship will last for a certain duration or include specific outcomes. Specific instructions pertaining to student mentorship and advising is provided in the section on student advising/ mentorship.
- **Community Responsibility:** This involves engagement with the broader professional community to support scientific exchange, education, outreach, policy development, or organizational oversight, fostering collaboration and societal impact. This activity may only be included in performance plans of RS3 and SrRS employees. While other employees may engage in these activities, they cannot be a requirement of them. Typically, this activity and Professional Development should have a combined weighting of no more than 15%.
- **Program Management and Leadership:** This is defined as activities related to the management/leadership of projects and programs and involves managing/leading other people. This activity is required in performance plans for all level 3 and Senior employees as well as all team leads. An activity may be considered as falling under this category if it passes three tests: The others test, the essence test, and the scope test.
  - Others test: The activity must substantially involve other people.
  - Essence test: Management or leadership must be the most significant aspect of the activity.
  - Scope test: The activity must be of significant duration.

For most CIWRO positions, the focus of the work is on Scientific/ Engineering R&D and/or Research Transitions; therefore, the point weighting should reflect this. In instances where there is specific funding allocated to other types of activities (Professional Development, Community Responsibilities, or Program Management and Leadership), higher than typical point weighting may be given to these activities. Team leads should coordinate with their chain of command when the proposed point weighting for these activities exceeds what is considered to be typical for CIWRO positions.

APPROPRIATE MINIMUM RESPONSIBILITIES

The types of activities included in an employee's performance plan depend on their position type, level, and category, as outlined below. While employees are encouraged to engage in additional relevant activities once they meet their core performance goals, these additional activities cannot be mandatory and, thus, should not be included in their performance plan. Team leads should ensure that the activities documented in a performance plan are aligned appropriately with each role's minimum scope and expectations.

- **Level 1**: This is a starting position and typically spans the first 3-4 years of postgraduate research experience. The focus for Level 1 employees is to demonstrate consistent execution of basic job functions of Scientific or Engineering R&D and/or Research Transition activities. RA1s may perform these duties in a supportive capacity under the guidance of others whereas RS1s are expected to lead their own project endeavors.
- **Level 2:** Employees at Level 2 are usually within the first 4-9 years of postgraduate research experience and, hence, are still considered early career. The focus for Level 2 employees is to play a critical role in their team's corporate success through effective execution of Scientific or Engineering R&D and/or Research Transition activities. RA2s may perform these duties in a supportive capacity with moderate or limited oversight whereas RS2s are expected to be more independent and play a critical role in major thematic activities within their team.
- **Level 3:** Employees at Level 3 usually have more than 9 years of postgraduate research experience and, hence, are considered mid-career. The focus for Level 3 employees is to play a substantial role in the corporate success of their division/branch through skillful and efficient execution of Scientific or Engineering R&D and/or Research Transition activities. Level 3 employees are also expected to take on the additional responsibility of Program Mgmt. and Leadership. RA3s may perform these duties in response to mandates from more senior leaders whereas RS3s typically perform these duties mostly under their own initiative. RS3s are also expected to have activities under Community Responsibilities.
- **Senior:** Senior-level employees usually have more than 16 years of postgraduate research experience. The focus for senior-level employees is to play an increasingly important role in the corporate success of the organization through skillful and efficient execution of Scientific or Engineering R&D and/or Research Transition activities and increasingly influential execution of Program Mgmt. and Leadership and Community Responsibilities. Sr. RAs may perform these duties in response to mandates from more senior leaders whereas Sr. RSs typically perform these duties under their own initiative.

All CIWRO employees are required to have a Professional Development element in their performance plan. This should be typically 10% of an employee's total effort.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The purpose of performance reviews is two-fold. First is to recognize and reward good performance. The second is to instigate continued professional development throughout an employee's career. Performance reviews are only given to full-time employees who have been employed for at least six months within the one-year evaluation period.

CRITERIA FOR PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

There are two considerations when assessing an employee's performance: Tangible outcomes and professional development.

- **Tangible Outcomes:** These are the measurable, accessible outcomes from an employee's work and include things like journal articles, conference presentations, agency reports, training materials, code repositories, and data archives. The performance plan of each employee specifies a minimum number and type of tangible outcomes associated with each objective. Employees who fail to produce the stated minimum are not meeting the expectations of their position.
- **Professional Development:** This refers to the accrual of skills or improved work habits that allow the employee to have more impactful results over time. Each CIWRO team has a professional-development rubric assigned to them that defines appropriate attributes for each promotion level and clarifies what behaviors correspond to the different evaluation categories in the OU system. More details on the rubrics are provided below.

OU PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CATEGORIES

There are five possible evaluation categories (or assessments) at OU. These are summarized below.

- **Improvement Required:** This evaluation category applies to employees who are failing at their job in spite of remedial actions already taken to help them. This evaluation category cannot be given to employees who were not previously informed of performance deficiencies following OU's Positive Discipline process.
- **Development Needed:** This evaluation category applies to employees who are failing to meet one or more expectations of their position and for whom remedial action is about to be implemented or is still underway. Employees in this evaluation category should be informed of performance deficiencies following OU's Positive Discipline process and are encouraged to ask for the resources they need in order to be successful. Additional training, updated computing resources, and changes in the frequency or manner of communication are examples of reasonable requests to help an employee improve.
- **Successful and Effective:** This evaluation category applies to employees who are meeting all of the expectations of their position both in terms of their accomplishments and professional development. A common misperception with a 5-point scoring system is that the middle score is equivalent to a letter grade of "C," which, in turn, is often interpreted to mean the employee is lacking in some respects. That would be a misunderstanding of OU's performance evaluation system. An assessment of "Successful and Effective" is a good score and implies the employee is doing everything right.
- **Highly Effective:** This evaluation category applies to employees who are exceeding all expectations beyond the typical range of outcomes for someone in their position both in terms of accomplishments and professional development.
- **Exceptional:** This evaluation category applies to employees who are far exceeding all expectations in terms of accomplishments and professional development. In a typical year, 5 to 10% of employees may earn this evaluation rating.

DETERMINATION OF AN EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CATEGORY

To determine an employee's performance evaluation category, their team lead will collect information from the employee about their tangible outcomes as well as evidence about the employee's work habits and professional development behaviors. Each of these is discussed below:

- **Tangible Outcomes:** The team lead will consider both the quantity and quality of tangible outcomes associated with the employee. Employees should not assume that because they have more of a given outcome than specified in their Performance plan (e.g., 2 journal articles when only 1 is required) that that means they should earn an assessment of "Highly Effective" as there may be other reasons this score is not merited. This evaluation category is only appropriate when the employee's output exceeds the range of what is typical for that position.
- **Professional Development:** The team lead will consider both tangible and intangible evidence provided by the employee as well as their own observations to determine the evaluation category based on the team's rubric. Employees need to consistently embody the characteristics of a given performance attribute to earn the assigned assessment. Consider the example rubric below. An employee who has healthy, productive collaborations within their team, but who has not yet demonstrated consistent maintenance of external collaborations will earn an assessment of "Successful and Effective." In addition to sustaining a level of "successful and effective" for their current promotion level's rubric, employees are expected to maintain a "highly effective" status for rubric elements from previous promotion levels in order to meet the expectations of their current position.

Attribute: Teamwork & Collaboration			
Development Needed	**Successful and Effective**	**Highly Effective**	**Exceptional**
Collaborative efforts are sometimes or often ineffective	Collaborative efforts with teammates are effective and promote a positive work environment or often ineffective	Has collaborative relations outside of immediate team that are productive and positive	Initiates new collaborations both internally and externally that are effective and advance the CIWRO mission

Table 1: Sample of an individual element from a rubric.

REALISTIC PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

When an employee is new to their position (either a new hire or newly promoted), their job performance is most likely to be evaluated as "Successful and Effective" as they are subject to heightened expectations relative to their previous position. As an employee gains mastery over their performance attributes and they become more productive with their accomplishments, their evaluation rating is more likely to increase to "Highly Effective." It is important to note, however, that just because improvement has happened relative to the previous year, an employee's performance category will not necessarily change. Rather, the employee must exceed what is typical for their position in order to earn an evaluation rating of "Highly Effective." It is also possible for an employee's evaluation rating to be lower than in the previous year. This is only problematic if the employee's performance has fallen low enough to justify Positive Discipline and an assessment of "Development Needed."

PERFORMANCE REVIEW SCHEDULE

Performance reviews are given bi-annually as described below:

- **Mid-year review:** In July, every eligible employee will be given an informal performance review that is not entered into the employee's personnel file. The purpose of this review is to give the employee and team lead an opportunity to have a candid conversation about the employee's performance so that employee can make corrections or take actions to receive a better evaluation on their annual review. As a part of this review, both the employee and team lead should carefully examine the employee's performance plan to ensure that the targeted tangible outcomes are still viable, that the project objectives haven't changed, and that the employee has met any deadlines that have already passed or are on track to meet deadlines that are soon to come. If changes to the performance plan are necessary, the employee and team lead should edit the performance plan accordingly and submit it to CIWRO leadership for review.
- **Final year-end review:** In January/February, every eligible employee will be given a formal performance review for the preceding calendar year. This review will be entered into an employee's personnel file as a permanent record. These reviews have three stages as discussed below.
    - **Self evaluation:** Employees should prepare a self evaluation that accurately reflects their success at reaching the tangible outcomes listed in their performance plan as well as their assessment of how successful they were at meeting the criteria in their team's rubric. Employees will present their self evaluation to their team lead in a one-on-one meeting in January/February. A template for a self evaluation is provided in Appendix B
    - **Leadership review:** CIWRO team leads will create a formal appraisal that is based on information they collected from the employee as well as their own observations and input received from others. This will be submitted to CIWRO leadership. All appraisals will be evaluated by CIWRO leadership to ensure consistent application of performance metrics across the organization.
    - **Formal feedback meeting:** After CIWRO leadership approves the appraisal, team leads will meet with each employee one-on-one to communicate the results of the performance review. In accordance with OU policies, employees have the opportunity to respond to the review in writing, if they so desire. These responses are a formal component of the performance review and are filed in their permanent record. Employees are expected to sign the performance review form. Their signature is only to acknowledge that they received the appraisal and does not imply they agree with it. Employees who do not return a signed performance review form to CIWRO HR will not be eligible for performance-based merit increases. An example performance appraisal for a hypothetical employee is provided in Appendix C.

PROMOTIONS

CIWRO provides promotion opportunities for employees in career-track positions. Applying for promotion is optional; employees who are content with their current level are not required to seek promotion to maintain their employment at CIWRO. In some cases, promotion may not be feasible if the advanced skills required at the next level are either undevelopable or not applicable to the position. Promotions are not automatic; employees must apply and demonstrate that they meet the established criteria for advancement, regardless of tenure.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PROMOTION

The following criteria must be met in order for an employee to apply for promotion.

- They must be either a Research Associate (RA) or Research Scientist (RS).
- They must have held their current position for at least one year. A position is defined by its type, level, and category (e.g. RA2 Meteorologist) and by the job responsibilities. Actions that constitute a change in position include
    - Promotions
    - Changing teams (if the work in the new team is sufficiently different from the old one)
    - Job recategorizations (e.g., meteorologist to developer)

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

An employee is considered ready to promote when the following two criteria are met:

1. Their accomplishments are consistent with what the "typical employee" in this position can accomplish in the so-called "typical timeline." Accomplishments are defined as the tangible outcomes from an employee's research such as journal articles, training materials, data collection efforts leading to publicly accessible data archives, agency reports, tech transfers, and developed/published code/algorithms. Important considerations regarding accomplishments are as follows:
    - Work that is "in progress" does not count toward the list of an employee's accomplishments. Rather, only completed work at the time of the promotion application is considered accomplished.
    - All targeted accomplishments in an employee's performance plan are expected to be fulfilled prior to application for promotion. (e.g., if an employee's Performance plan specifies that they should have authored or co-authored a journal article, this should have happened prior to application for promotion; otherwise, the promotion application will be declined.)
    - Research Scientists are expected to demonstrate end-to-end science. In other words, they must demonstrate an ability to see a project through the various stages of research (inception to evaluation, evaluation to publication, etc.) before applying for promotion. Evidence this has happened should be provided in their professional narrative.
    - Accomplishments from previously held positions (both within and outside of CIWRO) may be relevant for a promotion application only if they are relevant to the current position. The relevance of accomplishments from previously held positions must be explicitly documented in the applicant's professional summary and in the letter of recommendation from the CIWRO team lead. Employees with relevant experience from a previous position may include accomplishments from that position that occurred within the "typical timeline" for their current promotion application.
    - The typical timeline is defined as 3 years for level 1, 5 years for level 2, and 7 years for level 3. Employees are expected to generate a level of tangible outcomes that is consistent with what a typical CIWRO employee could do in these timelines prior to applying for promotion.

- The typical employee at CIWRO is an ambitious person who makes steady, measurable progress toward goals and completes tasks in a timely manner. Therefore, employees who are considering early promotion should be advised that their productivity must be exceptional in order to accomplish the same outcomes in a shorter time period than what is typical.
- A promotion application is considered early when it happens before the typical timelines defined above. Promotion applications on or beyond the typical timelines are considered standard. CIWRO does not use the concepts of on-time or late promotion applications. The typical timelines cannot be used to justify a promotion application solely based on years of service; they are only used to assess the body of accomplishments needed for promotion. The specific promotion timeline for an employee may be dictated by several unique factors such as the nature of the position and associated job tasks, the opportunities the position affords for additional responsibilities, requirements for specific professional training and development activities, and, of course, the employee's own accomplishments and performance.

2. They are capable of meeting the expectations of the next promotion level up both in terms of increased expectations for accomplishment as well as how they conduct themselves as a researcher. Since different teams at CIWRO have different functions, there is no "one size fits all" set of criteria for professional development. Rather, each team has a customized performance attribute rubric that describes minimum expectations for each promotion level. Employees are expected to demonstrate an ability to be "successful and effective" with the performance attributes of the new promotion level and consistent execution at a "highly effective" level for the attributes at their current level in order to be eligible for promotion.

BROAD DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH PROMOTION LEVEL

While the particular attributes of a promoting employee are dictated by their team's rubric and work needs, broadly speaking, the promotion levels can be described as follows.

- **Level 1:** This is considered a starting position in someone's career (i.e., first three to four years of postgraduate experience). The focus for employees at level 1 is on the "self" and their consistent execution of core team responsibilities and outcomes.
- **Level 2:** This is considered an early-career position (within the first 4 to 9 years of postgraduate experience). Level 2 employees are expected to effectively juggle multiple projects and responsibilities. In addition, their focus is on the "team" in that they make connections that include other team members and advance the team's interests in new ways.
- **Level 3:** This is considered a mid- to late-career level. Level 3 employees should be leading a line of work and leading or managing others. Research Scientists at this level should have a solid reputation in their broader scientific community. The focus of Level 3 employees should have graduated to their next higher organizational level (e.g., their branch or NOAA unit) in that they make connections that include both their own team members and people in other relevant teams and seek to advance the broader organizational interests in new ways.
- **Senior:** This is considered a mid- to late-career level and is typically only granted after an employee has at least 16 years of postgraduate experience. Senior researchers are expected to lead thematic areas, which may involve multiple lines of work with multiple collaborators, rather than just advancing their own work. Their focus should be on the "agency" in that they build new connections that advance the agency's interests in new ways. Last, they are expected to share in the administrative burdens of managing the organization through effective mentorship of junior scientists and the accrual/management of funding. Not every CIWRO employee is expected to want or have the skills or opportunities to perform these job responsibilities.

TIMELINES

Employees should reference the following timelines to adequately prepare for promotion:

- **June:** Training on the promotion process is typically provided in June of every year. Employees interested in applying for promotion should attend this training.
- **July:** Employees who want to promote should raise this topic with their team lead during their mid-year review. Team leads wishing to recommend an employee for early promotion (i.e., promotion that is ahead of the typical timeline), should get concurrence from their chain of command before agreeing to support that application.
- **Late October/Early November:** Applications are due to CIWRO. Late or incomplete applications will be automatically rejected.
- **March:** Decisions are communicated to the applicants.

PROMOTION APPLICATION ELEMENTS

A blank application for promotion is provided in Appendix D. There are 5 elements to the promotion application. These are discussed below.

- **Element 1:** Background Information. This is standard personnel information required by all applicants.
- **Element 2:** Updated Expectations. These are the rubric expectations and any changes to required tangible outcomes that will apply after promotion. Employees should have a candid conversation with their team lead about these heightened expectations before making a decision to apply; failure to live up to new expectations after promotion will result in a yearly performance assessment of "development needed."
- **Element 3:** References. These are only required for level 3 and Senior applications. References should be people who are free from conflicts of interest (i.e., they have no personal or professional stake in the outcome) and who are professionals in the field with familiarity with the applicant's work. In other words, they must have some history of observing or interacting with the applicant and an ability to put their work into perspective. Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to prospective references to ensure they are willing to serve in this capacity. A template of the letter sent to each reference is provided in Appendix E.
- **Element 4:** Productivity Examples. These are only required for applicants to RS3 and Senior RS. This is a list of three tangible outcomes (e.g., journal articles, conference presentations, tech transfers, webviewers, etc.) that are accessible and demonstrate that not only that meaningful science happened, but the outcomes were disseminated to the intended recipients. No additional editorial comments are required beyond the list itself in the application form. Rather, the applicant's professional summary should describe these tangible outcomes and why they're representative of their overall efforts. Links to journal articles, videos, code repositories, webviewers, etc, must be included that are accessible for those without NOAA.gov accounts. If applicants are uncertain about what to include or have issues with providing accessible content outside of NOAA.gov, they should consult with their team lead.

- **Element 5:** Supplemental Materials. Three additional items are required in every promotion package.
  - **CV or resume.** This should be comprehensive over the applicant's career and include relevant academic and professional achievements.
  - **Professional Summary.** This is a narrative describing the work activities the applicant has performed since they started their current position (or within the typical timeline when using accomplishments from previously held positions). Professional summaries have a limit of 2 pages for RA2/RS2 applications and 3 pages for higher promotion levels. The page limit assumes 1" margins and an 11-pt font. Best practices for the professional summary are provided in Appendix F.
  - **Team lead's letter of recommendation**. The endorsement of the applicant's team lead is required for the application to be successful. These letters are submitted directly to CIWRO. At a minimum, the team lead letter of recommendation must provide:
    - High-level context for the applicant's accomplishments and performance that are relevant for this promotion application. Emphasis should be placed on relevance and significance to the team and/or the organization's mission and broader impacts to the field and/or the external community.
    - An objective description with concrete examples addressing how the applicant's accomplishments and performance have consistently exceeded most of the expectations for their current level.
    - An objective description with concrete examples addressing how the employee has consistently reflected most of the characteristics associated with their next level.

    The letter of recommendation must clearly describe how the applicant's recent accomplishments and performance have exceeded most of the expectations for their current level and have reflected most of the characteristics associated with the next level. It should also provide evidence that the applicant's accomplishments that are relevant for this promotion application meet or exceed the productivity expectations for that position in the typical promotion timeline. The earlier a promotion application is attempted (compared to the typical timeline), the stronger the evidence that must be provided to justify it. For example, an application to level 2 submitted with 2 years of relevant experience must address how the level-1 employee has had accomplishments commensurate with 3 years of relevant experience (the typical timeline). That is, the letter of recommendation must present evidence that the applicant has been consistently performing at about 50% higher rates compared to their peers. It should be noted that applicants with 2 or more fewer years of experience compared to the typical timeline are highly unlikely to be successful as they would not have been able to complete the expected body of accomplishments in such shortened timeframes. For example, for an application to level 2 submitted with just 1 year of relevant experience, the letter of recommendation must present evidence that the level-1 employee has been consistently performing at about 300% higher rates compared to their peers.

APPLICATION REVIEW

Applications to level 3 and Senior are subject to a review by the CIWRO promotion board (Appendix J). This is a diverse body of researchers at CIWRO that have strong familiarity with CIWRO processes and its mission. The promotion board only makes a recommendation on the applications. They do not decide the final disposition. All applications are also vetted by the CIWRO leadership team, who also make a recommendation on whether to promote. The final disposition of the application is determined by the CIWRO director and is based on their evaluation of the application as well as the recommendations by the leadership team and promotion board (if applicable). Only information that is included in the application package will be considered.

APPEALS PROCESS

Applicants whose promotion application is rejected may appeal this decision. Appeals require a letter to the CIWRO Director signed by the applicant and endorsed by their team lead. The appeal letter should point out specific accomplishments or qualifications in the original application package that, based on the provided justification, appear to have been overlooked or misjudged. No additional materials may be added to an application package in an appeal. All appeal letters should be received by the CIWRO office no later than 5 pm within one month of receipt of the disposition. **Late appeals will not be considered.**

The CIWRO Director reviews appeals and, if needed, reconvenes the CIWRO Promotion Board and/or the CIWRO leadership team to discuss any revised promotion decisions. Applicants are notified of final promotion decisions.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All promotion application packages and promotion decisions are confidential. Applicants may not contact any members of the CIWRO Promotion Board to discuss their promotion application. All communications with an applicant regarding their promotion application are conducted through the CIWRO office.

POLICY STATEMENTS

FIELD DEPLOYMENT POLICY

The policies below pertain only to funded field deployments at CIWRO. Storm chasing outside of employees' funded activities is considered a personal activity and, therefore, requires taking PTO if it occurs during planned work hours.

POLICIES PERTAINING TO ANY FIELD DEPLOYMENT

- Employees may only engage in field deployments if they are funded on a project that includes field deployments as an objective, and their team lead approves their participation and number of deployments. Employees should work with their team lead on their funding allocation if they are working on a field campaign outside of their typical work duties.
- Employees may only engage in field deployment to the extent that their Performance plan and funding allow. Participation in a field deployment as part of professional development is also permitted, in that case, it should only constitute at most 10% of their effort. If field deployments threaten an employee's ability to meet other objectives assigned to them, they should refrain from accepting mission assignments or work with their team lead and funding sponsor(s) to have their Performance plans and funding revised.
- All deployments must include at least one CIWRO full-time employee who is available to act as the supervisor during the field deployment. Depending on the nature of the campaign, it may be that the supervisor also needs to be in the field. CIWRO HR requires a list of potential full-time employees serving in this role a minimum of two weeks prior to any deployment to ensure appropriate training has occurred.
- CIWRO HR must have a list of student employees that are in the potential pool of participants a minimum of three weeks prior to any training or deployments to ensure they are appropriately appointed at the university and that funding is in place to support their participation.
- CIWRO HR must be notified a minimum of 24 hrs prior to a deployment with the names of the CIWRO employees that will be in the field and the general location they are traveling to for situational awareness and Clery Act compliance.

- If field campaign funds are depleted, no additional deployments (local or non-local) will be allowed until new funding arrives at CIWRO.
- CIWRO employees that are engaged in field operations must have their travel and their time in the field covered by an appropriate funding source. CIWRO will not allow employees to charge time in the field to projects that do not have this effort as a declared priority.

LOCAL EFFORTS

- Herein, local is defined as missions that are either within 45 miles or do not include an overnight stay. No overnight stays, hotel fees, or per diem are allowed for local missions due to OU regulations.
- If a CIWRO employee starts a deployment that was initially expected to be local, but requires travel outside of 45 miles and an overnight stay, the deployment converts to a non-local effort.

NON-LOCAL EFFORTS

- Deployments that require travel outside of 45 miles and overnight stays must have funding specifically designated for travel as a part of the funding allocated to that field campaign.
- Non-local deployments require pre-approval in Concur; otherwise, travel expenses may not be reimbursed.

TRAVEL POLICY

Work-related travel can be funded either from a project/grant at OU or by an external collaborator, partner or agency. Work-related travel can be for several purposes, such as for data collection/product evaluation, for participation in scientific conferences, meetings or workshops, for presenting seminars, for participation in review panels, or other relevant purposes. Regardless of the reason for travel and funding source, the processes documented below must be followed. The costs associated with travel such as hotels, airline tickets, local transportation, and food (up to a certain amount) are covered by CIWRO only when travel is approved before the travel commences, and only when a CIWRO project or account is identified as the funding source when the travel request is made.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Employees who need to travel for their job duties must first discuss it with their CIWRO team lead. Federal employees cannot authorize or permit travel of CIWRO employees. The team lead will determine whether the travel is permitted and what project should cover the travel costs if CIWRO is requested to cover the cost of travel. The team lead must seek concurrence from the project manager or Principal Investigator (PI) of any project that will be used to cover the cost of travel. Note that this approval process is required even if an external agency is covering the cost of the travel. Travel is only allowed under the following conditions:

- The travel is appropriate for the funding source. Travel requests to conferences, field deployments, etc. that are irrelevant to the proposed funding will not be approved.
- The travel does not interfere with other priorities or agency needs.
- There is sufficient funding to support the travel.
- There is sufficient funding to support the time of the employee during the travel.

TRAVEL RESERVATIONS

After an employee has been approved for travel, they should fill out a travel request form in Concur and include what project or external source is supporting the travel in the appropriate box. Nonrefundable expenditures cannot be made until after this step is taken and the CIWRO team lead formally approves the travel request. Once approved within Concur, an employee may make nonrefundable expenditures.

The following list outlines best practices for different travel expenses that are in alignment with OU Travel policies.

- Airline tickets must be purchased through concur using an OU travel card. CIWRO employees are subject to the Fly America Act. Moreover, OU requires employees to use the cheapest flight unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Employees wishing to drive themselves to the event using their personal vehicles will only be reimbursed for mileage up to the cost of the cheapest-available flight. A screen capture of the flight estimates should be collected and saved as a record of this cost when making reservations on concur.
- Conference charges such as abstract submission fees and registration should be charged to the employee's OU travel card. When these charges post, employees should immediately assign them to an expense report to avoid having the expense deducted from their paycheck.
- Food can be charged to an employee's OU travel card, but if the expenses exceed per diem rates, the overage will be deducted from the employee's paycheck.
- Hotel fees must be within the federal per diem rates (which can be found at https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates) or be designated hotels for the event. Otherwise employees will have the overage deducted from their paycheck or reimbursement. Hotels can be charged to an employee's OU travel card or their personal credit card, but any incidentals such as room service charges may not be charged to the OU travel card.
- Parking fees at airports and hotels can be charged to an employee's OU travel card.
- Mileage to and from the airport is an acceptable travel expense. Employees should check the State of Oklahoma for current mileage rates.
- Rental cars are only reimbursed if there is insufficient local transportation or local transportation is more expensive than a rental car. A cost comparison of local transportation costs (e.g., taxis, uber) against the cost of a rental car (use charges, petroleum, parking fees) must be provided and any cost above that of the local transportation will not be reimbursed.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Employees are allotted up to 120 days after a trip to submit their reimbursement forms on concur. Failure to seek reimbursement or justify travel charges within this time will result in the travel charges being deducted from the employee's paycheck. Employees can apply for reimbursement as soon as all charges incurred on their OU travel card have posted after the completion of the trip.

Prior to submitting a travel reimbursement claim, employees should submit the "Concur Reimbursement Request" in Appendix G to agsgmc@ou.edu for internal approval. Once this is approved by a representative from CIWRO administration and appropriate funding information is added to the Concur travel claim, employees may submit their travel request for approval and reimbursement.

PERSONAL LEAVE ATTACHED TO TRAVEL

If an employee wants to append personal leave to CIWRO-sponsored travel the following rules apply.

- The employee must claim PTO for time they are not engaged in CIWRO-related activities.
- The employee must pay additional costs that are incurred as a result of their added personal travel. Employees should take screen captures of airfare on the days they ordinarily would have traveled to demonstrate whether there are additional costs. Extra nights at a hotel are the responsibility of the employee to pay as well as any increases in air fare associated with travel on different dates. Per diem should be adjusted accordingly so as to not include the time of personal travel.

REMOTE WORK POLICY

Remote work has three categories: situational, hybrid, and fully remote. Regardless of the category, remote work is not designed to be a replacement for dependent care - employees with dependent children/elders are expected to arrange for appropriate care if they are engaged in remote work.

Employees seeking to have remote work should consult with the OU guidelines on this process and comply with all rules and provide all of the required paperwork and documentation prior to engaging in remote work. This information is available at the following url:

https://hr.ou.edu/Managers-HR-Payroll-Coordinators/Remote-Work-Guidelines

SITUATIONAL REMOTE WORK

This is defined as temporary, non-recurrent, in-state, remote work that is for relatively short periods of time. Situational remote work does not require a remote work agreement, but employees must obtain prior approval from their CIWRO team lead for each instance of remote work. It is at the team lead's discretion whether to approve situational remote work - employees should not assume that their request for a situational remote work instance will be approved. Situational remote work should not be used as a substitute for instances requiring PTO.

HYBRID REMOTE WORK

Hybrid-remote work occurs when the employee regularly works offsite part of the week while the remainder of their time is spent working on site. At CIWRO, employees become eligible for hybrid-remote work if they have worked a minimum of 6 months in their current position and their team lead has conducted a performance review (either formal or informal) that demonstrates the individual is performing at a level of "Successful and Effective" or higher in the CIWRO performance review system. In addition to this, the employee's team lead should also evaluate the following:

- Is the position appropriate for routine remote work?
- Is the employee able to work independently with minimal supervision and feedback?
- Does the employee communicate effectively using appropriate technology (e.g., email, instant messaging, teleconferencing, etc)?
- Does the employee have sufficient organization, planning, and time management skills?
- Can the employee be available to attend in-person events as needed?
- Can the employee fulfill all collaboration/project needs as effectively in a remote location as in person?
- Can the employee be available for in-promptu discussions/meetings (via video conferencing, phone call) to the same degree that an employee working on site would be available?

If the answer to any of the above questions is no, remote work is inappropriate and should not be granted to the employee.

If the request for hybrid-remote work exceeds 2 days per week, team leads must consult with their chain of command prior to approval. Requests for more than 2 days per week of hybrid-remote work are subject to a greater degree of scrutiny and justification. For additional details on the processes required for approval and remote work agreements, please refer to the OU guidelines noted above. Hybrid-remote work agreements must be renewed annually and can be revoked at any time.

FULLY REMOTE WORK

Fully remote work occurs when the employee works 100% of their time in a remote location. Fully remote work situations should be rare and require the approval of the OU vice president. Out-of-state remote work also requires additional approval from OU HR to ensure the desired work location is on the list of approved states. In addition to the increased scrutiny on whether it is permissible, fully remote work requires extra time for approval. For employees seeking fully remote work, the application should be submitted to CIWRO HR no later than 120 days before the proposed start date of remote work. Applications for fully remote work cannot be initiated until after a performance review is conducted.

Fully remote work has two subcategories: temporary and permanent. Temporary remote work is for short durations of time (not exceeding 30 days). Both temporary and permanent fully remote work require the approval process noted above. Permanent remote work contracts must be revisited annually and may be revoked at any time.

At CIWRO, employees become eligible for fully remote work if they have worked a minimum of 12 months in their current position and their team lead has conducted a performance review (either formal or informal) that demonstrates the individual is performing at a level of "Successful and Effective" or higher in the CIWRO performance review system. In addition to this, the employee's team lead should evaluate the following:

- Is the position appropriate for fully remote work?
- Is the employee able to work independently with minimal supervision and feedback?
- Does the employee communicate effectively using appropriate technology (e.g., email, instant messaging, teleconferencing, etc)?
- Does the employee have sufficient organization, planning, and time management skills?
- Can the employee be available to attend in-person events as needed?
- Can the employee fulfill all collaboration/project needs as effectively in a remote location as in person?
- Can the employee be available for in-promptu discussions/meetings (via video conferencing, phone call) to the same degree that an employee working on site would be available?
- Is there a business need for the employee to work fully remote?

If the answer to any of the above questions is no, remote work is inappropriate and should not be granted to the employee.

Because fully remote work increases inherent risks to both the agency and the employee, the team lead should submit the following to CIWRO HR as a part of the application process

- A statement signed by the employee that acknowledges that no special concessions will be made to assess their performance or promotion readiness, regardless of the limitations that may be imposed by their fully remote status.
- A documented plan for task tracking and assessment of progress to ensure adequate performance.
- A statement explaining why the fully remote status is beneficial to the organization.

This document should be submitted to CIWRO HR to be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Last, team leads who are entertaining whether to allow fully remote work for an employee must consult with their chain of command before approving the agreement. Once an employee has their team lead's approval to work remotely, they should follow all instructions on the OU webpage listed above.

MEDIA/SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy documents policies on media interactions and acceptable use of official CIWRO social media accounts, which are those owned by CIWRO and those initiated with an ou.edu email address that are used in an official capacity. It also provides additional guidelines for professional social media use, including accounts outside the university domain.

USE OF OFFICIAL CIWRO SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- All content must be easily understandable and accessible.
- Only official partner accounts (e.g., National Weather Center, NOAA affiliated accounts, CIs, OU) or reputable, established organizations which CIWRO has had official interactions with (e.g., professional organizations, local school districts, charities) can be tagged, retweeted or shared as it relates to the CIWRO mission. Media stories may be shared on a case-by-case basis or if first done through an official university, NOAA Communications, or NOAA social media account.
- Media inquiries requested and/or received via social media (i.e., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Flickr, etc.) may be handled by CIWRO's or a partner agencies' communications representative.
- CIWRO's communication team is ultimately responsible for all official CIWRO social media. The communications team has the authority to set and enforce policies, grant access, and review and determine content. In the case of a security breach or inappropriate communication, the CIWRO communications team will work with management, IT staff, and university communications to address the situation.
- Only approved media managers can address comments and interact with the public on social media platforms as appropriate.
- No posts can be made while driving or during unsafe conditions that could result in a dangerous situation.
- Posts must be considerate and aware of national news, including but not limited to severe weather deaths and politically charged situations.
- Original posts may include appropriate memes and fun content but must be limited to the scope and authority of CIWRO, university, and partner activities and, when sharing research, will not diverge from CIWRO areas of expertise.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFESSIONALISM

- CIWRO employees should conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner in all public communications about or related to their work, whether online, in person, at public meetings, or in other settings.
- Employees should be aware that comments made on Social Media may reflect on CIWRO, its partners, and the National Weather Center, as well as fellow peers. Employees may want to be particularly aware of this if their CIWRO affiliation is in their social media bio, or if they are a "high profile" figure in the scientific community.
- Employees should be careful and cautious in emotionally charged discussions (e.g., politics, local broadcasts) and show respect for others' opinions. Employees may want to avoid arguing with people trying to bait them.
- When discussing their work, it may be best for employees to stick to their area of expertise and to topics that have been approved for public release, but employees may always provide unique, individual perspectives.
- Employees may want to be selective about what they publish on social media. Once something is posted on social media, it may be difficult to retract it. Employees should make sure their online brand doesn't diminish or tarnish their offline brand. What is published is widely accessible and will be around for a long time (Google has a long memory), so the content should be considered carefully.
- No discriminatory remarks on social media will be tolerated.

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING MEDIA INQUIRIES

- Employees should refer any media inquiries to the CIWRO communications representative before agreeing to do an interview or provide comments.
- The CIWRO communications representative will work with the employee on how best to proceed. Employees should only speak on areas in which they possess expertise and not outside their area of scientific study.
- The CIWRO communications representative will attend media interviews as availability allows to provide support and handle logistics. National Weather Center regulations require special arrangements to film on the property. The CIWRO communications representative will handle all arrangements for on-camera interviews at the National Weather Center for CIWRO employees.
- The CIWRO communications representative offers media training and interview prep sessions as needed.

PUBLICATION POLICY

This policy applies to the publication of documents, reports, manuscripts, abstracts, posters, presentations, and other scientific/engineering materials that include or are related to work conducted by CIWRO employees (herein simply referred to as "publications").

AFFILIATION

- CIWRO employees not affiliated with a federal partner should list their affiliation as

Cooperative Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather
Research and Operations,
The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

- CIWRO employees affiliated with a NOAA unit should list their affiliation as

Cooperative Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather
Research and Operations,
The University of Oklahoma and <NOAA UNIT>

Where the NOAA UNIT is one of the following:
NOAA/OAR National Severe Storms Laboratory, Norman, Oklahoma
NOAA/OAR Air Resources Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee
NOAA/NWS Warning Decision Training Division, Norman, Oklahoma
NOAA/NWS Storm Prediction Center, Norman, Oklahoma
NOAA/NWS Operations Proving Ground, Kansas City, Missouri
NOAA/NWS National Weather Service Training Center, Kansas City, Missouri

- CIWRO employees affiliated with a non-NOAA unit should list their affiliation as

Cooperative Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather
Research and Operations,
The University of Oklahoma and <AFFILIATION>

Where the AFFILIATION may be one of the following:
U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) User Facility, Norman, Oklahoma
School of Meteorology, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For work funded by a federal partner through CIWRO's Cooperative Agreement, a funding acknowledgement must be included in the acknowledgement section of the publication.

- For peer-reviewed materials, the following acknowledgement must be used: Funding was provided by NOAA/Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research under NOAA-University of Oklahoma Cooperative Agreement #NA21OAR4320204, U.S. Department of Commerce.
- For non-peer-reviewed materials, the following acknowledgement must be used: This [conference paper/extended abstract/report/video/etc.] was prepared by [author(s)] with funding provided by NOAA/Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research under NOAA-University of Oklahoma Cooperative Agreement #NA21OAR4320204, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

If the work was not fully funded by CIWRO's Cooperative Agreement, an agency-specific acknowledgement may need to be included. Reach out to Cassie Eads for information on award number for acknowledgement on non-cooperative agreement awards.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The University of Oklahoma has an Academic Freedom Policy (https://apps.hr.ou.edu/FacultyHandbook/SearchResults.aspx?searchString=freedom#3.2.1) that defines the rights and responsibilities of employees that engage in discipline-related teaching, learning, research, publication, and service. Academic freedom includes the liberty to conduct research and draw conclusions rooted in evidence; it defends researchers' right to choose methodologies, draw conclusions, and assert the value of their contributions. In compliance with this policy, CIWRO does not require publications to undergo internal-review or content-approval processes. However, when CIWRO researchers publish work with external collaborators, their publications may be subject to processes driven by the policies of their co-authors' organizations. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the external co-authors to ensure their organization-specific policies are followed. When external (non-CIWRO) publication policies appear to conflict with CIWRO's policies, CIWRO employees are strongly encouraged to discuss any perceived conflicts with their CIWRO team lead or with the CIWRO leadership team.

It is important to note that the university's Academic Freedom Policy does not limit a researcher's ability to voluntarily seek input from others before publishing their work. Asking one or two trusted colleagues to review a publication before submission to a formal peer-review process is always strongly encouraged. A friendly review before submission will likely help increase publication acceptance chances. It is also recommended that researchers keep their CIWRO team lead and any technical advisors appraised of their publication plans. Doing so should help prevent unintended conflicts internally or with funding agencies and should ensure that any publication costs will be covered.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

CIWRO researchers are expected to focus on the work they are funded to do. Furthermore, CIWRO cannot use Cooperative Agreement funds to support efforts in areas that are not a priority to the funding agency. It is the responsibility of CIWRO authors to ensure funds are available to support their efforts and the publication costs of their results. CIWRO authors must communicate with their CIWRO team lead as early as possible about their intention to author or co-author publications. It is also important to communicate relevant updates throughout the publication process. Employees cannot sign off on page charge forms for publication costs. These should be emailed to AGSGMC@ou.edu.

PROCESS FOR PEER-REVIEWED MANUSCRIPTS

The highest-listed CIWRO author is responsible for the following process.

- **Before Submission**
    - Make sure the affiliation of all CIWRO authors is correct and that any needed funding acknowledgement is included.
    - Submit manuscript to Randy Peppler (rpeppler@ou.edu) for a double-check of affiliation and funding acknowledgement.
    - If you are an NSSL affiliate and you are the highest-listed NSSL author (federal or affiliate), submit the NSSL Publications Clearance Form (available on the NSSL intranet). This triggers an administrative review of the publication by NSSL's leadership, but there is no need to wait for a response before submitting your manuscript.
- **After Acceptance**

If CIWRO is paying for partial/total publication costs:

- Ask your CIWRO team lead to determine/confirm which project will cover publication costs.
- Submit an AGSGMC Purchase Request Form (available on the CIWRO intranet) to the Grants Management Center (AGSGMC@ou.edu).

- **After the Paper is Published** (i.e., when a full reference or an Early Online Release is available)
    - If you are an NSSL affiliate and you are the highest-listed NSSL author (federal or affiliate), submit the publication to the NSSL Publications Database (available on the NSSL intranet).

STUDENT ADVISING AND MENTORING

Student engagement is a fulfilling and worthwhile activity many CIWRO employees enjoy and is an important component of the CIWRO mission. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the primary responsibility of CIWRO research scientists and associates is research and development and not academic teaching. Employees are expected to cultivate their own lines of work and meet typical project milestones for their position, regardless of their engagement with students.

Student positions are considered fixed-term appointments. The appointment ends when the funding ends, regardless of whether they have graduated or not. If the funding ends before a student graduates, it is up to their advisor (not their CIWRO team lead if the team lead is not the student advisor) to make arrangements for them to be funded using other means. If alternative funding is not arranged, their position at CIWRO will be terminated. Similarly, transitions from UGRA to GRA must be arranged in advance by the advisor (not the CIWRO team lead when they are not the student's advisor). This transition usually requires a four-month lead time.

TERMINOLOGY

Student Advising is defined as directing the scientific work of a student as well as having responsibility for reporting on the extent to which they have met the requirements of their program. Examples of student advising include, serving as the chair (or co-chair) of a graduate research assistant (GRA), and serving as the advisor of an undergraduate honors student.

Student Mentorship is defined as providing guidance to the professional development of a student or helping to direct the scientific work of a student, but not having responsibility for reporting the extent to which that student has met the requirements of their program. Examples of student mentoring include serving on a graduate student committee, mentorship of summer undergraduates in the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), Hollings, First-Year Research Experience (FYRE), or similar programs and capstone projects.

Student Supervision is defined as (a) having supervisory authority (e.g., the responsibility to approve travel requests, time off, etc.) over students and/or (b) having a temporary supervisory role as the CIWRO field-campaign supervisor. Only team leads or those appointed by CIWRO leadership have supervisory authority over others.

POLICY ON STUDENT ADVISING

- It is important that sufficient funding be allocated for student advising. This may be explicitly budgeted as part of a project or under the umbrella of professional development or community service as described below.
- Student advising for a level 1 or 2 employee falls under the umbrella of professional development. Depending on the time required to advise the student(s), this activity may consume the entire time allotted for professional development, in which case, the employee should refrain from taking on any additional professional development activities if they cannot produce the required tangible outcomes associated with their other tasks. An example of how this should be included in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 2.
- Student advising for a level 3 or senior employee falls under the umbrella of community responsibilities. Depending on the time required to advise the student(s), this activity may consume the entire time allotted for community responsibilities, in which case, the employee should refrain from taking on any additional community responsibility activities if they cannot produce the required tangible outcomes associated with their other tasks. An example of how this should be included in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 3.
- CIWRO employees who advise students are still responsible for meeting the expectations of their positions as described in their performance plans.
- Advising students requires CIWRO team lead approval. Approval may also be required by the Department in which the student is enrolled in. It is the responsibility of the employee engaging in student advising to obtain all required approvals prior to engaging in such activities.
- Employees traveling with a student in their role as advisor or supervisor must take Clery Act training prior to the trip. This includes (but may not be limited to) field campaigns and conference travel. Employees should check with their chain of command if they are taking other kinds of travel that includes students.
- Unless student advisors are also a CIWRO team lead, they do not have supervisory authority over the student and therefore, cannot approve travel or navigate performance issues. Only a CIWRO team lead is authorized to handle these matters. Student advisors must always coordinate with the student's supervisor on personnel issues.
- CIWRO employees who are regularly advising students should consider becoming Adjunct Faculty in the Department in which the students they advise are enrolled. They must obtain CIWRO team lead approval prior to making such an application.

POLICY ON STUDENT MENTORSHIP

- Mentoring can take a significant amount of time. Therefore, employees are encouraged to carefully consider their time commitments before accepting mentorship responsibilities.
- Mentoring is considered a professional development activity for all CIWRO employees and, therefore, should not take more than 10% of someone's time.
- CIWRO employees are highly encouraged to declare their intent to mentor someone to their CIWRO team lead before making commitments.

POLICY ON STUDENT SUPERVISION

(or supervision of employees advising/mentoring students)

- Employees are expected to fulfill all of the expectations documented in their performance plan. An excessive amount of time devoted to mentoring or advising students for which direct funding is not available can negatively impact an employee's performance and CIWRO's ability to meet research objectives. CIWRO team leads should take into consideration the following when approving employee requests to mentor or advise students:
    - Does the employee have the necessary experience to mentor/advise someone else in the range of research activities of the program (e.g., writing papers, conference presentations, developing code, etc.)?
    - Is the amount of time proposed appropriate given the expectations in the employee's Performance plan?
    - Has the employee budgeted an appropriate amount of time to advise the student in their proposal if it is on direct-to-CI funding and it exceeds 10% of their time?
- If a federal employee wants to advise student employees, an OU employee must be appointed as the student's supervisor, who may be a CIWRO team lead or other non-CIWRO OU employee. If a CIWRO team lead is the supervisor of a CIWRO student employee, their role includes approving time sheets and travel and addressing any performance or behavior issues. This effort falls under the umbrella of program management and leadership in their Performance plan. If the time required to supervise students exceeds the time commitment for this element, CIWRO team leads should work through their CIWRO chain of command to identify potential solutions.
- When reporting on an employee's engagement with students in their yearly review or promotion letters, CIWRO team leads should be careful to use the appropriate terminology above (advising vs. mentoring) in their narratives.
- Student engagement should be indicated in an employee's Performance plan as demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3 on the next page.

Performance Element: *Professional Development Activities* *Required for everyone with a typical weight of 10% **Performance Objective:** To participate in activities benefiting personal professional growth and the professional growth of others. Jane Doe will advise 1 GRA. She is not explicitly funded to advise this person and expects to spend less than 10% of her time on it. **Point Weight (%):** 10
Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply) ☒ The completion of least 1 learning activities (e.g., reading a book, watching a video, taking a course, reading papers, etc) for the enhancement of personal professional skills. *Required for everyone ☒ The completion of required training by prescribed deadlines. *Required for everyone ☐ Mentorship of junior colleagues or students *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it. ☐ The pursuit and management financial support for research (level 1,2 only) ☒ Advising of students (level 1, 2 only) *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it. ☐ Other:

Table 2: An example of the Professional Development Activities table for a level 1 or 2 employee who wishes to engage in student advising.

Performance Element: *Community Responsibilities* *Required for RS3, SrRA, and SrRS; not appropriate for level 1, 2 employees. The combined point weights of Community Responsibilities and Professional Development elements typically add up to no more than 15%. **Performance Objective:** Active involvement in the broader professional community in support of scientific exchange, education, outreach, policy making, or agency oversight. John Doe will advise 1 GRA. He has funding to cover 10% of his time for this and is using 5% alloted for community responsibilities to cover the remainder of his time on this task. **Point Weight (%):** 15
Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply) *At least one of the following options is required ☒ Service as a referee for manuscripts or research proposals, resulting in at least 2 review(s) annually. *Required for meteorologists and RSs ☐ Collaboration with external partners in government, academia, and/or private sector through service on boards, councils, and/or policy-making bodies, usually at least collaborative activity(s) per year. ☐ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations and/or demonstrations, interactions with the media and/or public, usually at least outreach activity(s) per year. ☒ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations, lectures, teaching courses, mentoring graduate/undergraduate students, and/or authoring textbooks. *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it. ☐ Other:

Table 3: An example of the Community Responsibility Activities table for a level 3/Senior RS who wishes to engage in student advising.

POSTDOCTORAL ADVISING AND MENTORING

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE COMMITTING

Any Research Scientist at CIWRO can advise or mentor a postdoc, but a CIWRO team lead must be the supervisor of a postdoc. Before committing to advise a postdoc, a CIWRO scientist should receive their team lead approval. CIWRO team leads should take into consideration the following when approving employee requests to advise/mentor postdocs:

- Does the employee have the necessary experience to advise someone else in the range of research activities of the program (e.g., writing papers, conference presentations, developing code, etc.) and to mentor their career development (how to write proposals, how to develop one's own career, how to network, etc.?)
- Is the amount of time proposed appropriate given the expectations in the employee's Performance plan and their funding portfolio?
- Has the employee budgeted an appropriate amount of time to advise the postdoc in their proposal if it is on direct-to-CI funding and it exceeds 10% of their time?

It is important that adequate support is available for CIWRO scientists to mentor postdoctoral employees. This may be explicitly budgeted as part of a project or under the umbrella of professional development or community responsibilities. When developing Performance plans or budgets for competitive proposals, adequate time should be allocated for these activities, which include not only scientific advising of the postdoc, but also providing mentoring and career guidance for the postdoc, in consultation with the CIWRO team lead. CIWRO employees who advise postdocs are still responsible for meeting all expectations of their position.

SUPERVISION OF POSTDOCS

Only a CIWRO team lead can have supervisory authority over the postdoc. If a postdoc advisor is not the postdoc's supervisor, they cannot approve travel or navigate performance issues. Only the CIWRO team lead is authorized to handle these matters. Postdoc advisors should coordinate with the CIWRO team lead if there is a problem with performance or for travel requests.

If a federal employee wants to advise a CIWRO postdoc, a CIWRO team lead must be appointed as the postdoc's supervisor. If a CIWRO team lead is the supervisor of the postdoc, their role includes approving timesheets, travel, and PTO, and addressing any performance or behavior issues. Federal employees can advise postdoc researchers on science objectives and research goals.

Postdocs are required to have a Performance Plan submitted to CIWRO HR within 2 months of starting. Postdocs are required to have their first performance appraisal within 3 months of joining OU. Performance appraisals are given by the CIWRO team lead. Employees who supervise postdocs should record these activities in their performance plans using the same rules as for student advising (Tables 2,3).

POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTMENT LENGTH/EXTENSIONS

Postdoctoral appointments are considered fixed term one-year appointments with the opportunity for renewal one year at a time, and generally last a maximum of 3 years or until funding expires, whichever comes first. Postdoc positions do not transition into career-track positions at CIWRO unless the specific circumstances below are met. Postdocs wishing to switch to a career-track position must apply for available positions and compete like any other candidate for openings. It is not guaranteed that open positions, even within the same team, will go to currently employed postdocs.

Postdoctoral scientists at CIWRO may write research proposals to competitive calls as lead PI. If such a proposal is approved, the funding may be used to cover the postdoc's salary at CIWRO or the postdoc may take the funding to another institute if they receive another appointment (subject to approval of the funding agency, their new employer, and OU). If at least 2-years of funding is available to cover at least 50% of the postdoc's salary, it may be possible that the postdoctoral position may be converted to a Research Scientist position subject to the following considerations:

- If 100% of the postdoc's salary is not covered by the research proposal, the postdoc is responsible for finding a funding source to cover the remaining part of their salary.
- If a CIWRO branch director is asked to cover some portion of the salary, the CIWRO team lead will consider the list of priorities provided by NOAA leadership, whether there is sufficient funding to cover the remainder of the person's salary, and whether the person is qualified to work on those projects where funding is available.
- In no circumstance should the postdoc ask a federal employee to cover the outstanding contribution of a postdoc who is looking to make this transition–all such communications should be directed to their CIWRO team lead.
- There is no guarantee that a postdoc who converts to an RS position will continue to be supported once the funding provided by the competitive proposal ends–that would be determined by available funding and programmatic priorities.

PROPOSAL ADMISSION & ADMINISTRATION

CIWRO employees may pursue external funding in support of their novel research ideas provided they follow the guidelines below. CIWRO employees considering a proposal concept are highly encouraged to consult with their CIWRO team lead before starting the process.

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION THROUGH OU

- Employees should familiarize themselves with the OU proposal submission processes described at the following url: https://www.ou.edu/research-norman/research-services/proposal-submission. Among the required steps is submission of a proposal information sheet to the Office of Research Services (ORS) a minimum of two weeks before any deadlines. Failure to meet this deadline may result in proposals not being submitted in time. During high-demand episodes, ORS handles proposal requests on a first-come-first-serve basis. Hence, it is wise to submit the information sheet as soon as a decision is made to submit a proposal rather than wait until the two-week deadline.
- High-demand calls may also have an internal deadline that precedes the hard agency deadline. Failure to comply with internal deadlines set by CIWRO or ORS may result in your proposal not being submitted on time.
- A budget spreadsheet is available from CIWRO Admin. CIWRO administrative support can help with budget planning provided they are given sufficient time. The budget spreadsheet is required by ORS as a part of the submission process.
- Employees who wish to use federal assets (including office space, laptops, data, etc.) in the execution of grants must seek and obtain federal concurrence from their federal division/branch lead prior to submission. A copy of this form is provided in Appendix H.
  - NSSL branch directors must be given a minimum of one week to review requests for the use of federal assets in CIWRO sponsored research. Branch directors may request additional information about the scope of work to make their decision.
  - If the federal partner does not give concurrence, a proposal is still allowable. However, the employee will need to coordinate with CIWRO admin for office space to conduct the research prior to the submission of the proposal. The proposal may also need to account for the full OU Indirect Costs as opposed to the special negotiated rate for individuals housed in federal space.
- Letters of intent may be submitted directly by the PI, provided this is acceptable to the funding agency. Full proposals must be routed through ORS.
- Only fully complete proposals with all required federal authorizations, letters of support, and budget information will be processed by CIWRO admin and ORS. DO NOT SUBMIT partial packages to CIWRO and ORS with the expectation they will start processing paperwork while you complete the remainder of the work.

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING THE SCIENCE/COSTS WITHIN A PROPOSAL

- The Performance planned for investigators involved in the research should be aligned with their job title. For example, planned work for software developers should encompass responsibilities typical for software developers, not engineers or meteorologists. Similarly, Performance planned for an RS should include typical expectations for an RS.
- Proposal PIs should include in their budget adequate time for themselves and co-investigators to do all the proposed tasks, including participation in field work and analysis of collected data, and supervision of students. Failure to do this may result in the proposal reviewing poorly (e.g., if an adequate budget is not provided for the proposed work, the funding agency may not fund the proposal due to lack of realism).
- If the proposal merits a new hire,
  - The employee must seek concurrence from their federal branch/division lead in order for this person to be made an affiliate of that agency. Otherwise, the new hire must work in CIWRO space using only CIWRO assets, and the proposal may have to charge the full OU Indirect Costs for this portion of the work.
  - Only CIWRO team leads are authorized to officiate hiring actions and provide performance reviews (including postdoctoral researchers or graduate research assistants), which constitutes an additional burden for them. Therefore, employees seeking to add a new hire to their proposal must seek concurrence from their CIWRO team lead before the proposal is submitted.
- The proposal PI is responsible for ensuring the budget and Performance plan are within the scope dictated by the funding agency. Neither ORS nor OU admin will check to make sure these elements are within scope.
- CIWRO does not cover travel or publication costs for research conducted with direct-to-CI grants. PIs should take care to ensure these costs are factored into their budgets.
- CIWRO cannot transfer funding to federal entities. If a PI wishes to buy cloud computing time on a federal partner's account or have equipment that is managed by the federal government, the funding for that must go directly to that federal partner, not CIWRO.

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING GRANTS

- Proposal PIs are responsible for conducting monthly audits of the budget and certifying expenses. They are also responsible for ensuring that reports are submitted and any other agency requirements are met. These tasks can constitute a non-negligible effort and are not supported by CIWRO or Task II funding. Rather, PIs should include in their budget costs the time required to do these things.
- It should never be assumed that new hires brought into CIWRO using direct-to-CI grants will be picked up using Task II funding when the grant expires, even if that hire is made an affiliate of the federal agency. Therefore, as a grant is nearing its termination, employees funded on direct-to-CI funds will need to coordinate on next steps for their funding so they do not have a lapse in employment or funding.

HOW PROPOSAL WRITING AND ADMINISTRATION SHOULD BE FACTORED IN PERFORMANCE PLANS

- Level 1 and 2 employees should classify proposal writing and administration as a professional development activity in their yearly Performance plan. Depending on the time required to develop and/or administer a proposal, this activity may consume the entire 10% typically allotted for professional development, in which case, the employee should refrain from taking on any additional professional development activities if they cannot produce the required tangible outcomes associated with their other research tasks. An example of how this should be included in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 4.
- Level 3 and Senior employees should classify proposal writing and administration under Program Management and Leadership in their yearly Performance plan. Depending on the time required to write and administer the grant, these employees may or may not be able to engage in other Program Management and Leadership activities if they cannot produce the required tangible outcomes associated with their other research tasks. An example of how this should be included in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 5.

Performance Element: *Professional Development Activities*

*Required for everyone with a typical weight of 10%

Performance Objective:

To participate in activities benefiting personal professional growth and the professional growth of others.

Jane Doe will spend 5% of her time developing a competitive proposal.

Point Weight (%): 10

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

☒ The completion of least 1 learning activities (e.g., reading a book, watching a video, taking a course, reading papers, etc) for the enhancement of personal professional skills. *Required for everyone
☐ The completion of required training by prescribed deadlines. *Required for everyone
☐ Mentorship of junior colleagues or students *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ The pursuit and management financial support for research (level 1,2 only)
☒ Advising of students (level 1, 2 only) *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☒ Other: Proposal development

Table 4: An example of the Professional Development Activities table for a level 1 or 2 employee who wishes to engage in proposal writing.

Performance Element: *Program Management and Leadership*

*Required for RA3, RS3, SrRA, and SrRS. This element should only be included for other positions if the employee is a team lead.

Performance Objective:

To manage programs/projects and lead people responsible for achieving scientific/engineering advances.

John Doe will use 5% of his time on this element to manage the radar QC project. He will use the other 5% to write a competitive proposal.

Point Weight (%): 10

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

☒ The pursuit and management financial support for research.
☒ Program/project management contributing to the advancement of the radar quality control project *Required for levels 3 and Senior
☐ Performing the administrative and management functions of CIWRO team leads. *Required for team leads
☐ Other:

Table 5: An example of the Program Mgmt/Leadership Activities table for a level 3 or Senior employee who wishes to engage in proposal writing.

SERVICE ON BOARDS/COMMITTEES/CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Serving the broader community through engagement with boards and committees or by planning or assisting in the planning of scientific meetings is encouraged where it is appropriate. It is important for employees to weigh the time required for these activities against other commitments they have already made before accepting invitations to serve in these ways.

POLICY ON SERVICE ON BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- This form of service falls under the umbrella of professional development in the yearly Performance plans of level 1 and 2 employees. Professional development is typically limited to no more than 10% of an employee's time unless there is a dedicated line of funding to cover the activity. An example of how this should be recorded in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 6.
- For level 3 or senior employees, this activity falls under the umbrella of community responsibilities. This element should not typically exceed 10% of a person's time unless there is a dedicated line of funding to cover the activity. CIWRO employees who serve in these ways are still responsible for meeting the expectations of their position. In other words, service activities cannot be a substitute for other kinds of expected tangible outcomes. An example of how this should be recorded in an employee's performance plan is provided in Table 7.

Performance Element: *Professional Development Activities*

*Required for everyone with a typical weight of 10%

Performance Objective:
To participate in activities benefiting personal professional growth and the professional growth of others.

Jane Doe will spend 2% of her time serving on an AMS STAC committee

Point Weight (%): 10

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

☒ The completion of least 1 learning activities (e.g., reading a book, watching a video, taking a course, reading papers, etc) for the enhancement of personal professional skills. *Required for everyone
☐ The completion of required training by prescribed deadlines. *Required for everyone
☐ Mentorship of junior colleagues or students *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ The pursuit and management financial support for research (level 1,2 only)
☒ Advising of students (level 1, 2 only) *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☒ Other: Serving on the AMS STAC committee for Radar Meteorology

Table 6: An example of the Professional Development Activities table for a level 1 or 2 employee who wishes to engage by service on a board.

Performance Element: *Community Responsibilities*

*Required for RS3, SrRA, and SrRS; not appropriate for level 1, 2 employees. The combined point weights of Community Responsibilities and Professional Development elements typically add up to no more than 15%.

Performance Objective:
Active involvement in the broader professional community in support of scientific exchange, education, outreach, policy making, or agency oversight.

John Doe will advise 1 GRA. He has funding to cover 10% of his time for this and is using 5% alloted for community responsibilities to cover the remainder of his time on this task.

Point Weight (%): 15

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

*At least one of the following options is required
☒ Service as a referee for manuscripts or research proposals, resulting in at least 2 review(s) annually. *Required for meteorologists and RSs
☒ Collaboration with external partners in government, academia, and/or private sector through service on boards, councils, and/or policy-making bodies, usually at least ____ collaborative activity(s) per year.
☐ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations and/or demonstrations, interactions with the media and/or public, usually at least ____ outreach activity(s) per year.
☐ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations, lectures, teaching courses, mentoring graduate/undergraduate students, and/or authoring textbooks. *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ Other: ____

Table 7: An example of the Community Responsibilities table for a level 3 or Senior employee who wishes to engage with service on a board.

AWARDS & OPPORTUNITIES

DIRECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY RESEARCH FUND

Every spring, CIWRO offers a competitive grant called the Director's Discretionary Research Fund (DDRF). These are small grants (typically ranging from $10 - $40K) that are valid for 12 months. The purpose of the DDRF is to seed nascent, exploratory, or otherwise unfunded research activities conducted by CIWRO researchers rather than merely providing support for ongoing activities. CIWRO is particularly interested in funding high-risk projects that have a high-potential payoff (i.e., may lead to significant advances for CIWRO and/or future funded research projects). In some years, specific themes may be identified and given preference.

RULES

- **Eligible Applicants**: Any CIWRO RS or RA is eligible to lead a proposal.
- **Project period:** The period of performance lasts from 1 July - 30 June. This may be extended if additional time is needed to complete the project. However, no additional funding will be given to support such an extension.
- **Proposal Length:** The project description cannot exceed 1 page, single spaced, 12-point font. Any overage beyond this will be disregarded in the review process.
- **Scientific Topics:** Proposals must fit one or more CIWRO themes:
  - Weather Radar and Operations
  - Mesoscale and storm modeling
  - Forecast Applications
  - Seasonal-to-subseasonal prediction
  - Social and socioeconomic impacts of high-impact weather.
- **Partnerships:** External collaborators are allowed, but only the salaries of CIWRO employees can be funded from these grants. Travel of non-CIWRO employees or consortium partners can be covered from these grants.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Qualifications of the PIs & collaborators to successfully complete the work in the time allotted:** Do the PIs and their collaborators have enough previous exposure/ experience with the topic to meet the objectives?
- **Scientific/Technical merit:** Is the experiment design scientifically sound? Are the objectives reasonable considering the time/assets budgeted for the project?
- **Potential for future innovation:** Is there a strong potential this research can lead to future funding and/or transform science in a high-profile way?
- **Mission priorities:** How well does this project address specific themes highlighted for the competition.
- **Other criteria** may be added in specific years depending upon specific themes or priorities being targeted.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are typically due in the mid-spring with a disposition announcement by late spring. A template for an application form is available in Appendix I. The application has three sections.

- Basic Information: This section is a fill-in-the blank form that includes the proposal title, CIWRO PIs, the total budget, and a declaration of the CIWRO theme(s) this proposal falls under.
- Project Description: This section cannot exceed 750 words. Proposals should cover the following four subtopics in this section.
    - Problem Statement: This should be a clear and concise statement indicating what this project aims to accomplish and the need it fulfills in the broader community. Relevant background information should be included. If the proposed work is a continuation of a previous DDRF, this should be stated in this subsection.
    - Objectives/Methodology/Timeline: This subsection should include the specific objective(s) of the work including the expected measurable and tangible outcomes. Targeted timelines for each objective should be stated. An example of the preferred formatting for this section is below
        - Obj 1: Evaluate such-and-such by getting X data into Y software and measuring Z correlations. Expected completion: 1 Jan. The specific outcome will be a new algorithm for ABC that can be shared with others.
        - Obj 2: Compare this to that by using data from ABC source to check if the new algorithm is robust. Expected completion: Q3 of funding year. The specific outcome will be a conf. Presentation sharing the results with the broader community.
    - Other resources that are being leveraged (if it applies): If there are other investigators from outside of CIWRO that are involved or additional assets available outside of what is budgeted and requested in this proposal, these should be described in this sub-section.
    - Impacts and long-term plans: This subsection should describe the potential long-term benefits of this work, including how future funding may be secured to continue the work or major innovations that this effort may bring forth.
- Detailed Budget: This is a preformatted table the PI should fill in. Additional rows for each PI should be added to the table. If there is a cost item that is irrelevant to the proposal (e.g., equipment), this should be denoted as NA in the application.

CIWRO ANNUAL AWARDS

CIWRO offers four competitive awards to acknowledge excellence as it relates to employee performance. These awards map to the elements in performance plans and are described below. Awardees get a cash reward, a certificate, and their name engraved on an award plaque displayed in the main CIWRO office. They will also be acknowledged at a CIWRO all-hands meeting.

OUTREACH/PROGRAM MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP/ SERVICE

This award is given to one employee annually who exhibits excellence in one or more of the following areas:

- Exemplary service to the broader community by providing reviews for journals or service on boards, councils, and/or policy making bodies in such a manner as to bring distinction to CIWRO.
- Meritorious contributions to outreach through presentations and/or demonstrations, interactions with the media and/or public.
- Outstanding contributions to education and/or mentorship of others through lectures, teaching courses, supervising graduate/undergraduate students, and/or authoring textbooks.
- Exceptional pursuit and management of financial support for research at CIWRO.
- Excellence in carrying out the functions of team leadership.

RESEARCH TO OPERATIONS TRANSITION ACTIVITIES

This award is given to an employee (or team of researchers) who exhibited particular excellence in one or more of the following areas:

- The transfer of existing knowledge and/or technology for use in operational and/or training settings that has a transformative impact on the targeted user.
- Preeminence in fostering new understanding, techniques, capabilities and/or advances in the development and dissemination of training materials.
- The stellar preparation and revision of technical documents, code repositories and/or reports related to the final stages of the R2O process.

SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Two awards are given annually for an employee (or team of researchers) who performed outstanding research with related tangible outcomes (e.g., journal articles, technological innovations, etc.) that are potentially transformative in one or more of the following regards:

- Exemplary professionalism and productivity in field projects, experiments, testbed evaluations, and other collaborative data collection efforts
- The design, implementation, improvement, documentation, testing, and/or maintenance of software, hardware, infrastructure, and/or applications for research or research-support purposes that is potentially transformative and innovative.
- Outstanding efforts in the creation of new knowledge, approaches, or technologies that fill unique or high-profile needs in the field.

AWARD PROCESSES

A call for nominations is issued every fall. Any CIWRO employee is allowed to lead a nomination package, but employees are not allowed to self-nominate. NOAA technical leads and CIWRO Fellows may also submit nominations. The nominator must collect 1 letter of support in addition to their own letter. The nomination package must include the following:

- A nomination letter of 750 words or less that states who is being nominated and for what award as well as tangible evidence in support of the nomination. Tangible evidence consists of quantifiable and/or accessible information about the nominee's efforts such as journal articles, press releases, webpages, etc.
- The additional letter should clearly explain why this individual or team is deserving of the award. Letters may be from CIWRO staff, NOAA staff, or people external to CIWRO/NOAA.
- A citation of less than 50 words summarizing why the individual/team is deserving of the award.

The CIWRO leadership team will convene anonymous panels to review the nominations for each award category and provide a recommendation to the CIWRO director on the choice of awardees. The final decision on awards is at the discretion of the CIWRO director. Award decisions are announced in the late fall.

APPENDICES PAGES

APPENDIX A: TEMPLATE OF A PERFORMANCE PLAN

CIWRO PERFORMANCE PLAN

Employee Name:
Employee Title (e.g., RA2):
Employee Job Category: Choose one
Team (no acronyms):
Period of Performance: **to 31 December 2025**

CIWRO OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION – all parties should sign and date

Assistant Director: Sebastian Torres
My signature certifies that this performance plan conforms to CIWRO policies.

____

Supervisor:
My signature certifies that this plan and attached performance rubrics will form the basis of the employee's performance appraisal.

____

Employee:
My signature acknowledges receipt and agreement of this plan and attached performance rubrics that will form the basis of my performance appraisal.

____

Performance Evaluation

This document specifies the minimum outcomes necessary for the employee to meet the basic expectations of their position. The employee's performance assessment will be based on the completion of the required tangible outcomes listed in this document as well as their work behaviors, as defined in their performance rubrics. The employee is expected to sustain a standing of "*successful and effective*" for the rubric attributes at their current promotion level and sustain a standing of "*highly effective*" for the rubric attributes from previous promotion levels.

Instructions

1. Fill out the header information at the top of this page. Unless the employee starts midyear into a new position, the starting date for the period of performance is 1 January. Otherwise, the starting date is when they started in their new position. A position is considered new after hiring, promotion, or recategorization actions. A position *may* be considered new after reassignment to a different team or project; please consult with your supervisor.
2. Pages 2-4 of this document provide templates for 5 different performance elements. Not all performance elements may be relevant for a given position. In this case, the employee should indicate a 0% weight for this element. If a performance element is relevant
    a. The employee and their supervisor should work collaboratively to list the project goals and outcomes in the indicated section of the table. This can be as vague or as detailed as is necessary.
    b. The supervisor must determine the required tangible outcomes by checking the appropriate boxes as well as providing quotas on minimum expectations, if it is applicable for that outcome.
    c. The supervisor must determine the point weight for each element. Point weights for individual elements can range from 0 to 100%; the sum of all point weights must be 100%.
    d. When assigning required expectations from a different job category (e.g., a required expectation for software developers assigned to a non-software developer), the supervisor should consult with their chain of command before finalizing and signing the work plan.

Performance Element Outline

Performance Element	Point Weight (%)
Scientific/Engineering R&D Activities	
Research Transition Activities	
Professional Development Activities	
Community Responsibilities	
Program Management and Leadership	
Total	

Performance Element: *Scientific/Engineering R&D Activities*

Element Description:
The creation of new products or improvement of existing ones through scientific research and/or innovative technology. This includes most conventional R&D activities as well as testbed evaluations, development of software for research purposes, and the development/maintenance of experimental real-time systems.

Performance Objectives:
Conduct collaborative research and/or development activities as PI, co-PI, or in an equivalent scientific/technical role as described below.

Insert specific tasking. Can be as detailed or vague as needed and can include time percentages for each task if relevant.

Example:

Priority 1: Evaluate the relationship between radar reflectivity and runway cross winds at core 30 airports (25%)

Priority 2: Perform sensitivity experiments of the MPAS iteration of WoFS and compare to cbWoFS (65%)

Point Weight (%):

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)
☐ Participation in field projects, experiments, testbed evaluations, and other collaborative data collection efforts, usually for at least week(s) annually.
☐ The design, implementation, improvement, documentation, testing, and/or maintenance of software, hardware, infrastructure, and/or applications for research or research-support purposes. *Required for software developers and RA engineers
☐ The preparation, review, submission, and/or revision of peer-reviewed manuscripts and/or reports, usually resulting in at least manuscript(s) or report(s) published or in review annually as author or co-author. *Required for meteorologists and RSs
☐ Presentations at local, national and/or international conferences/meetings, usually at least annually. * Required for meteorologists and RSs
☐ The development of datasets for use in research and development efforts.
☐ Other:

Performance Element: *Research Transition Activities*

Element Description:
Activities related to the *final* transition of products that are required for the receiving agent to successfully deploy them. Does not include testbed activities or development/maintenance of experimental real-time systems.

Performance Objective:
Improve operational capabilities through the application of scientific/engineering advances and understanding as described below.

Insert specific tasking as described above

Point Weight (%):

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)
☐ The transfer of existing knowledge and/or technology for use in operational and/or training settings.
☐ The design, implementation, documentation, testing, transferring, and/or maintenance of software, hardware, and/or applications for training purposes.
☐ The fostering of new understanding, techniques, capabilities and/or advances for end-user training purposes.
☐ The development of datasets for use in training.
☐ The preparation and revision of technical documents, code repositories and/or reports, usually resulting in at least documents(s) or report(s) published annually.
☐ Other:

Performance Element: *Professional Development Activities*

*Required for everyone with a typical weight of 10%

Performance Objective:
To participate in activities benefiting personal professional growth and the professional growth of others.

Insert specific tasking as described above

Point Weight (%):

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

☐ The completion of least learning activities (e.g., reading a book, watching a video, taking a course, reading papers, etc) for the enhancement of personal professional skills. *Required for everyone
☐ The completion of required training by prescribed deadlines. *Required for everyone
☐ Mentorship of junior colleagues or students *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ The pursuit and management financial support for research (level 1,2 only)
☐ Advising of students (level 1, 2 only) *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ Other:

Performance Element: *Community Responsibilities*

*Required for RS3, SrRA, and SrRS; not appropriate for level 1, 2 employees. The combined point weights of Community Responsibilities and Professional Development elements typically add up to no more than 15%.

Performance Objective:
Active involvement in the broader professional community in support of scientific exchange, education, outreach, policy making, or agency oversight.

Insert specific tasking as described above

Point Weight (%):

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

*At least one of the following options is required
☐ Service as a referee for manuscripts or research proposals, resulting in at least review(s) annually. *Required for meteorologists and RSs
☐ Collaboration with external partners in government, academia, and/or private sector through service on boards, councils, and/or policy-making bodies, usually at least collaborative activity(s) per year.
☐ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations and/or demonstrations, interactions with the media and/or public, usually at least outreach activity(s) per year.
☐ Contributions to education and/or outreach through presentations, lectures, teaching courses, mentoring graduate/undergraduate students, and/or authoring textbooks. *When this activity is expected to take more than 10% of the employee's time, it must have associated funding that explicitly supports it.
☐ Other:

Performance Element: *Program Management and Leadership*

*Required for RA3, RS3, SrRA, and SrRS. This element should only be included for other positions if the employee is a team lead.

Performance Objective:
To manage programs/projects and lead people responsible for achieving scientific/engineering advances.

Insert specific tasking as described above

Point Weight (%):

Required tangible outcomes (check all that apply)

☐ The pursuit and management financial support for research.
☐ Program/project management contributing to the advancement of *Required for levels 3 and Senior
☐ Performing the administrative and management functions of CIWRO team leads. *Required for team leads
☐ Other:

APPENDIX B: TEMPLATE OF A SELF-EVALUATION FORM

SAMPLE: Self-Assessment
John Doe – RS1: EMPLID: 123456

1. Accomplishments
Work plan elements 1&2 (R&D and R2X activities: 80%)

a) *Decision-Support Tools*: Lead developer on 2 algorithms, co-developer on 2 additional ones (AutoSIGs, HEMS, snow rate, MRMS HCA) targeted for MRMS, Hazard Serv. & WSSI
b) *Data Audits/Assessments*: Contributed to an evaluation of visibility observations during snow squalls
c) Participated in the testbedding of ProbSR in WPC's 2021/22 winter-weather experiment
d) Coauthor on 1 conference presentation, lead author on 1
e) Coauthored one journal article and led one that were conditionally accepted or in press in 2022 (WCAS, JAMC)

Work plan element 4 (Community service: 10%)

a) Reviewed 1 NSF proposal and two journal articles (WAF, JAMC)

Work plan element 5 (Professional development: 10%)

a) Completed all mandatory training
b) Engaged in Linked-In Learning to improve on time management and confident decision making

Other significant accomplishments

a) Co-PI for a JTTI ($345,678).
b) Co-mentored REU student

2. Assessment of performance attributes
RA1/RS1 attributes

Teamwork/collaboration: 3 (Collaborative efforts with teammates are effective and promote a positive work environment*)*

· Active participation in team meetings (element 5c)
· Co-author on team member's conference presentation and journal article (elements 1d,e)
· Contributor to testbed efforts (element 1c).

Guidance/Timeliness: 4 (Coordinates new tasks and establishes realistic deadlines/ deliverables for self and solves research problems with innovative approaches)

· Leading the development of two algorithms with limited direction from TA (element 1a)

Work Results/Quality: 4 (Scientifically-sound work that has been disseminated publicly and is well-received by external agencies)

· See accomplishments from work plan elements 1d,e

Self-Assessment: 3/4
I'm exceeding my targeted accomplishments for 2022 so far. I feel I'm at a "4" for two of my attributes. I'm at a "3" for teamwork due to my lack of collaboration with external partners. I've found it difficult to accept responsibilities that include being the interface for these external partners because I'm concerned about doing or saying something that could hurt our professional relationships with these people. To help myself with this hang-up, I've been taking Linked-In learning training on effective communication.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Employee Name: John Doe
Employee Position: RA1
CIWRO Team Leader: Jane Smith
Employee Category: Meteorologist
Evaluation Period: 1 Jan – 31 Dec YYYY
Most recent promotion: NA
Overall Performance Rating: successful and effective (3)

Performance Attributes under Development:

- ·**Attribute 1:** Teamwork/collaboration: highly effective (4) - Has collaborative relations outside of immediate team that are productive and positive
- ·**Attribute 2:** Guidance/Timeliness: successful and effective (3) - Carries out tasks as directed and on time and independence in solving most research problems for self
- ·**Attribute 3:** Work Results/Quality: successful and effective (3) – Scientifically sound results that are maturing to the point of public dissemination/tech transfer

Performance Narrative:
John Doe has shown great professional development in his first full year at CIWRO. He's been spinning up several new skill sets that are enabling him to work more productively. This past year he contributed to three projects: An evaluation of S2S forecasts of weather conditions conducive to wildfires, a testbed evaluation of a new algorithm that gives a 1-hr probability of CG lightning, and he evaluated a new method for computing Kdp on PAR output. His outputs include 2 conference presentations, contributions to a formal report on the testbed, and contributions to a formal WPO report on the lightning algorithm. One thing John did that we are all excited about was that he developed a new visualization tool that overlays ASOS and LSR observations collected in real time with gridded MRMS data. We now all use this tool in evaluation of our various algorithms. John Doe is a member of the outreach committee. Last, John Doe has started writing a formal journal article documenting the results of his Kdp assessment. I'm very proud of John and find him to be a great asset to the team.

Professional Development for 2024:
I'd like for John to focus on work results/quality and get his first CIWRO journal article as first author completed and submitted for review and to have a second article in preparation on his S2S work. To do this, he should continue with his efforts to learn how to write academically and with greater efficiency/proficiency by implementing techniques from the book "How to write a lot." I also recommend he expedite the process of writing future journal articles by starting earlier in the process and writing regularly, as the science is evolving.

APPENDIX D: TEMPLATE OF THE PROMOTION APPLICATION

Promotion Application

Deadline: 1 November

Late/Incomplete applications will be denied

- Promotion Packages should be emailed to the CIWRO office on or before the deadline.
- Questions regarding promotion should be directed to the CIWRO leadership team

Applicant's Name:
Applicant's Email:

1. Background Information (required from everyone)

Targeted change in position (e.g., from RA2 to RA3)	
Tenure in current position* (e.g., 5 yrs, 2 mo)	
NOAA Affiliation/team (e.g., NSSL/WRDD/Transpo Apps)	
CIWRO Team Lead	
Federal Technical Advisor	

*This is the amount of time you will have held your current title, promotion level, or been in your division, whichever is the shortest, *at the time applications are due*. Tenure resets when you've promoted or changed job categories (e.g., meteorologist to software developer). Only applicants that have held their current position for at least a year (on the day applications are due) are eligible for promotion.

2. Updated Expectations (required from everyone)

Rubric Expectations after Promotion

List performance metrics from rubric for anticipated promotion level. *Only* include the new attributes for your anticipated promotion level, not previous or future ones.
Example list (replace with relevant items for yourself and define what constitutes meeting expectations).

1. *Communication* – provides clear documentation, written reports, oral presentations in a timely fashion.
2. *Org. Prestige* – represents agency in a way that advances our stature in the broader community.
3. *Timeliness* – meets deadlines in complete and on time.

Expected Changes to Targeted Accomplishments after Promotion

Summarize any substantial change to existing duties and describe any new duties that will be assigned to you after you promote.
Example list (replace with relevant items for yourself)

1. *Program Mgmt and Leadership:* After promotion, I will be expected to manage individual direct-to-CI grants including oversight of the science of contributing team mates to ensure adequate progress is made toward deliverables and all reports are submitted to the funding agency on time.

2. *Formal publications:* Before promotion, I was expected to *contribute to or lead* at least one journal article per year. After promotion, I will be expected to *lead* one journal article per year in addition to contributing-author roles.
3. *Testbed evaluation:* Before promotion, I only observed testbed efforts. After promotion, I will be expected to lead testbed evaluations. This expectation includes successful completion of IRB training at OU and maintenance of certification moving forward. Strict adherence to IRB protocols is expected as a part of this new responsibility.

3. References (not required for promotion to level 2)

- If applying to RA3: 2 references, 1 must be external to your lab/division
- If applying to SrRA: 3 references, 2 must be external to your lab/division
- If applying to RS3, 5 references, 3 must be external to your lab/division
- If applying to SrRS: 5 references
  - no more than 2 that are internal to your division/lab
  - at least 2 that are not considered “collaborators” in the past 5 years.
    Collaborators are defined as
    - co-authors on papers, presentations, or reports (that have fewer than 10 authors),
    - PIs or co-PIs on grants,
    - people who are members of your team and/or have worked on the same project

Include their names, affiliation, contact info (email and phone), and how and how long they know you.
If references are not required, delete this section.

Example reference (include the appropriate number of references for yourself using the table format below).

Reference 1

Name	John Doe
Affiliation	University of Oklahoma
Position/Title	Professor of Meteorology
Email	John.doe@ou.edu
Phone	123-456-7890
How long have you known each other	Over 10 years
What qualifies them to comment on your application?	Dr. Doe and I have co-authored 5 papers and 2 proposals. I have served on the graduate committee of 3 of his students. He is an internationally recognized expert in winter weather and transportation science, having published over 50 relevant papers on the topic.

4. Three example products/outputs (if applying to RS3 or SrRS)

This is only a list of three products/output (e.g., journal articles, conference presentations, tech transfers, webviewers, etc) that is accessible and demonstrates that not only did science happen, but the intended outcomes were disseminated to the intended recipients.

Your professional summary should describe these research outputs and why they're representative of your overall efforts. No additional editorial comments are required beyond the list itself. Links to journal articles, videos, code repositories, webviewers, etc, must be included that are accessible for those without NOAA.gov accounts. If you are uncertain what to include or have issues with providing accessible content outside of NOAA.gov, please consult with your team lead.

Do not include more than three examples. Please be sure to provide the exact link to the productivity example itself – if the reviewers are unable to determine where on this webpage the product is (or what the product is), we will discard that as a valid example and your application will be considered incomplete.

If productivity examples are not required, delete this section.

Example list (replace with relevant items for yourself).

1. Reeves, H.D., N. Lis, G. Zhang, and A.A. Rosenow, 2022: Development and testing of an advanced hydrometeor-phase algorithm to meet emerging needs in the aviation sector. *J. Appl. Meteor. Climatology*, **61,** 521-536. https://doi.org/10.1175/JAMC-D-21-0151.1
2. Reeves, H.D., M.E. Baldwin, A.A. Rosenow, and D.D. Tripp, 2023: Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of precipitation-type algorithms using statistical validation. *23rd Conf. on Aviation, Range, and Aerospace Meteorology*, Amer. Meteor. Soc., P11.1 https://ams.confex.com/ams/103ANNUAL/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/414990
3. MRMS algorithm to ingest CoCoRaHS network transitioned to NWS operations (July 2017). http://vmrms-ark/wiki/index.php?title=CoCoRaHS

5. Supplemental Materials (required from everyone)

1) *Curriculum Vitae (or resume):* Should be comprehensive over career and include relevant academic/research history.
2) *Professional Summary:* Narrative describing research activities since you have held your current position.
   a. ***Page limit of 2 pages for RA2/RS2 applications and 3 pages for higher promotion titles.*** The page limit assumes 1" margins and an 11 pt font.
   b. Employees applying ahead of the typical timeline of 3, 5, or 7 years for levels 2, 3, and Sr, respectively must convincingly argue that their accomplishments scale with what the typical employee can accomplish in the typical timeline.
3) *Team lead's letter of recommendation.* Your team lead should submit this directly to Tanya Riley. It is also due on or before the application deadline. Applications without the team lead's endorsement will be declined.

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO REFERENCES OF PROMOTION

CIWRO Promotion Program

Request for Letter of Recommendation

Dear REFERENCE,

APPLICANT at the Cooperative Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather Research and Operations (CIWRO) is seeking promotion to NEW POSITION (see below) and has provided your name as a reference who can speak to the nature of their scientific/technical activities and outcomes over the past X to Y years. We are most interested in the following aspects of APPLICANT's professional accomplishments (to the extent you are able to comment) .

- The quality and impact of their professional achievements,
- Their stature in the broader community and/or among stakeholders, and
- The quality and impact of their outreach, education, and/or professional service.

Your comments on the above will be used to inform the CIWRO leadership and promotion board of the applicant's qualifications. All promotion decisions are made by the CIWRO director.

We request all letters be returned via email to our human resources officer, NAME (EMAIL) on or before DEADLINE. If you are unable to meet this deadline or provide a letter, a response indicating as much is greatly appreciated. Your letter will be available to the reviewers of APPLICANT's promotion application but will otherwise be kept confidential as allowed by law.

I recognize that writing reference letters such as this consumes both time and energy - your candid evaluation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr. Greg McFarquhar
Director, Cooperative Institute for Severe and High-Impact Weather Research and Operations

INSERT APPROPRIATE POSITION DESCRIPTION FROM OPTIONS ON NEXT PAGE

Position Descriptions

A *Research Associate III* has achieved notable success in the pursuit and support of research, outreach, training, education, and/or service often under the direction of others. They generally work in a collaborative role with more senior investigators and are expected to show independence in carrying out their job responsibilities. They are expected to play substantial roles in supporting basic and applied research activities, laboratory and field experiments, data collection and interpretation, development and use of hardware and/or software, scientific and technical publications, proposal writing, the formulation of training, education and outreach products for the public, budget preparation, or human resource activities.

A *Senior Research Associate* has demonstrated sustained superior performance in the pursuit and support of research, outreach, education, and/or service activities and exhibits a high level of scientific and professional maturity. The activities of a Senior Research Associate are strongly and consistently characterized by leadership, independence, and responsibility. They are expected to show significant accomplishment in research or in support of research, which will likely involve substantial roles in supporting laboratory and field experiments, data collection and interpretation, development and use of hardware and/or software, scientific and technical publications, proposal writing, the formulation of training, education and outreach products for the public, budget preparation, or human resource activities.

A *Research Scientist III* has achieved notable success in conducting research, outreach, education, and/or service activities. They are recognized by peers within the national and international communities as having made substantial and unique contributions in their chosen research areas. The activities of a Research Scientist III are strongly and consistently characterized by leadership, independence, and responsibility. They are expected to show substantial accomplishment in research and in support of research, which will likely include regular publication in peer-reviewed journals, initiation and leadership of various activities, regular presentation of papers at national or international meetings and/or workshops, patent awards, and successful raising of financial and institutional support.

A *Senior Research Scientist* is considered by CIWRO to be analogous to that of a full Professor within a university faculty. An individual in the Senior Research Scientist position has reached a high level of scientific and professional maturity. They have made, over a sustained time period, substantial and unique contributions in their chosen research areas and has been recognized for these contributions by peers within the national and international communities. The activities of a Senior Research Scientist are strongly and consistently characterized by leadership, independence, and responsibility They are expected to show substantial accomplishment in research and in support of research, which will likely include regular publication in peer-reviewed journals, initiation and leadership of various activities, regular presentation of papers at national or international meetings and workshops, patent awards, and successful raising of financial and institutional support.

APPENDIX F: BEST PRACTICES FOR A PROMOTION NARRATIVE

NARRATIVE PAGE LIMITS

- 2 pages for applications to RA2, RS2
- 3 pages for applications to all other positions.
- Assumes single-spaced, 11 pt font, and 1″ margins

A GOOD NARRATIVE SHOULD INCLUDE …

- How long you have been in your current position and whether this application is on an accelerated timeline. Example: I became an RS1 in October 2021. Hence, this application follows the typical timeline.
  - If you are applying on an accelerated timeline (i.e., you have not been in your current position for what is considered the typical timeline for their position on the day the applications are due), you are required to state this is an early promotion application and convincingly demonstrate you have accomplished what typically takes 3, 5, or 7 years to do. A convincing demonstration includes reference to what is typical in your division for people promoting to the same promotion level. This will require you to do some research to ensure you match these standards.
- A description of your current job responsibilities. Example: My responsibilities include development of decision-support algorithms in support of NWS and DOT operations. This work involves regular communication with stakeholders, making presentations at conferences, writing technical reports and journal articles.
- A brief summary of your body of accomplishments. Example: Since becoming an RS2, I have published 4 peer-reviewed manuscripts, led 13 conference presentations, been awarded ~$800K in direct-to-CI funding, and mentored 3 REU students.
- Specific examples of productivity/accomplishments: Example: I led a multi-team effort to collect observations of X during such-and-such field campaign. This work involved operating the mobile radar and coordinating on times and locations of the various instruments.
  - This discussion should be put in context of what the typical employee does in the typical timeline Example: My accumulated accomplishments include leading one field campaign, contributing to two testbed evaluations, leading 12 conference presentations, and 4 journal articles. This is commensurate with what the typical employee in our division accomplishes in the typical timeline for an RS2.
  - It should also address the relevance of the accomplishments to agency priorities. Example: My efforts toward developing an algorithm to predict the probability of C-G lightning using a multi-sensor approach supports a critical need in NWS operations and fits within the FACETs paradigm supported at NSSL.

- Specific examples of professional development toward meeting the expectations of the next promotion level. Example: I've worked hard to improve my writing skills so that I can meet the higher expectations for journal article productivity in the next promotion level. I took online training on how to write with more efficiency and clarity. As evidence of my growth, I note my last journal article was completed in half the time I took on previous ones and it was accepted pending minor revisions.
- If you are promoting to RS3 or SrRS: You should explain the three productivity examples in your application including what the example is, what your role was in making this happen, and why it's a good example upon which to base a promotion decision. Example: One of my keystone efforts is the development of a new algorithm to fill in voids in radar coverage at low altitudes due to overshooting. This algorithm is a novel fusion of radar, satellite, and NWP data that is created using deep learning techniques. The product provides pilots of low-altitude aircraft a more reliable picture of where flying conditions are potentially hazardous due to turbulence or icing and was developed in response to an NTSB recommendation made to both the FAA and NWS. The infusion of deep learning into MRMS mosaics is a new area of exploration for NSSL. The resulting product has been testbedded at NWS's Aviation Weather Testbed, 3 conference presentations have been made about it, and 1 formal journal article for which I am the first author has been published. Reviews from the testbed indicate the product is very useful by decision makers with one respondent saying, "when it comes to shallow precipitation, we were flying blind over much of the CONUS. This really transforms safety and in a way that's familiar and easy for the non-meteorologist to comprehend." The algorithm is slated to go into NWS operations in FYXX. Productivity example 2 in my application is a link to the real time MRMS experimental viewer showing the live and archived feed of this product.
- If you are counting previous job experience toward your body of accomplishments:
    - Timeline Relevance: Only include accomplishments that fall within the typical timeline for promotion in your current role.
    - Relevance to Current Position: You must explain why each accomplishment is applicable to your current position. Accomplishments from previous roles are considered relevant if they meet all the following criteria: (1) the qualifications required for your previous role are comparable to those required for your current position; (2) the nature of the work performed in your previous role closely aligns with the responsibilities of your current position, and (3) The tangible outcomes expected in your previous role are similar to the outcomes expected in your current role.

APPENDIX G: CONCUR REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATION

Concur Reimbursement Request

Name	________________
Reason for Travel/Expense	________________
Date/Time of Departure (business travel)	________________
Date/Time of Return (business travel)	________________
Destination	________________
Personal Travel Days (list day/time begin/end)	________________
Mileage (address left from if not the one in Concur)	________________

Check One: Parked at Airport ☐ Shuttle to Airport ☐ Dropped Off ☐ Rode with someone else claiming mileage ☐

Expense Type	Travel Card	Personal Funds
Airfare	☐	☐
Hotel (if designated provide documentation)	☐	☐
Registration	☐	☐
Taxi/Shuttle *(indicate number of times)	☐	☐
Other Transportation *(what type)	☐	☐
Parking	☐	☐
Baggage	☐	☐
Rental Car *(Justify Below)	☐	☐
Tolls	☐	☐
Gas	☐	☐
Abstract	☐	☐
Meals *(number of charges if travel card used)	☐	☐
Other Expenses*	☐	☐

Attach agenda (indicate if any meals were provided)
If no agenda then attach Informal Agenda form

Do you have expenses without a receipt? If so detail them here.

Any additional information (Explain any items that are starred above)

Funding Source from Travel Request:

Chartfield Spread:

Send completed form to AGSGMC@ou.edu

APPENDIX H: COPY OF EXTERNAL FUNDING PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

External Funding Proposal Checklist

1. Cooperative Institute (CI): CIWRO
2. NOAA Unit:
3. Principal Investigator:
4. Proposal Title:

5. Proposal Abstract: See Attached
6. Proposal Budget: See Attached
7. Proposal Funding Sources (Agency and Funding Opportunity Number):

	YES	NO
8. Is the CI employee's salary funding 100% funded by NOAA through the existing CI award? If no, indicate where funding comes from.	☐	☐
9. Can the proposal be submitted directly by NOAA? If yes, why is it more advantageous for the proposal to be submitted by the CI?	☐	☐
10. Does the proposed research align with and contribute directly to one or more of the NOAA laboratory or program's strategic research priorities and/or NOAA's mission agency responsibilities? If yes, please explain.	☐	☐
11. Is the proposed research a high priority for the program, lab, and/or NOAA? Briefly explain.	☐	☐
12. Would the proposal enhance the NOAA laboratory or program (e.g., stature, research capabilities)?	☐	☐
13. Would the CI employee(s) who would participate in the proposed work continue to contribute sufficiently to the NOAA lab or program or NOAA's goals to merit having offices in the lab and/or access to other lab resources?	☐	☐

NOAA Laboratory/Program Director Approval

APPENDIX I: APPLICATION FOR DDRF

YYYY DDRF Application

Deadline: Day Month Year

Late/Incomplete applications will be denied

- Application Packages should be emailed to the CIWRO Executive Director of Finance and Operations on or before the deadline.
- Questions regarding DDRFs should be directed to the CIWRO director

Basic Information

Proposal Title	
CIWRO PIs	
Total Budget	
CIWRO theme	

Project Description (1000 word maximum)

The headers below indicate the four required sections of the project description.

Problem Statement

Objectives/Methodology/Timeline

Other resources that are being leveraged (if applicable)

Impacts and long-term plans

Detailed Budget

Add rows for additional PIs if needed. If any of the itemized expenses are not relevant for your project, indicate it as NA

Cost Item	
PI salary	
Equipment	
Travel	
Publications	
Total budget	

APPENDIX J: CIWRO PROMOTION BOARD

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the CIWRO Promotion Board (herein referred to as "the Board") are appointed by the CIWRO Director. Members are initially appointed for a one-year term renewable at the discretion of the Director. Membership is limited to full-time CIWRO Research Associates and Research Scientists. The Board must have at least three members and must include representation from two or more NOAA units.

RESPONSIBILITIES

For promotions to levels III and Senior, the Board provides recommendations to the CIWRO Director regarding the appropriateness of promotion applications. The Board performs an initial review of promotion application packages, approves the list of references (if applicable), performs a secondary screening, evaluates the appropriateness of promotion applications, and provides recommendations to the CIWRO Director. If needed, the Board also advises the CIWRO Director on appeals.

INITIAL REVIEW

All promotion application packages received by the established deadline are initially screened by the CIWRO office. During the initial screening, the CIWRO office reviews all promotion application packages and verifies that all required elements (as described in the corresponding Career Track document) are included. The CIWRO office forwards all complete application packages to the Director (promotions to level II) or to the Board (promotions to levels III and Senior) for their initial review. During the initial review, the Director/Board reviews applicants CVs, professional summaries, and letters of recommendation from the CIWRO Team Leader.

LIST OF REFERENCES

If applicable to the promotion package, the Board reviews the list of references provided by the applicant to ensure that a complete and unbiased perspective of the applicant can be obtained. If necessary, the Board may recommend modifications to the list of references provided by the applicant. The Board forwards all approved lists of references to the CIWRO office so that letters can be requested in a timely manner.

SECONDARY SCREENING

All reference letters received by the CIWRO office by the established deadline are forwarded to the Board. During the secondary screening, the Board verifies that all promotion packages include the required minimum number of reference letters. The Board notifies the CIWRO office about any applications with incomplete packages, and these are removed from further consideration.

EVALUATION

The Board evaluates all complete promotion application packages and recommends their approval or rejection. Only the materials in the application package and the specific criteria for promotion may be used in the evaluation process. The Board is expected to reach consensus on all promotion recommendations. If this were not possible, the Board provides the majority recommendation indicating the number of dissenting votes.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board provides a written justification for each promotion recommendation. For a positive recommendation, the justification summarizes how the applicant meets the specific criteria for promotion. In the case of a negative recommendation, the justification describes the perceived gap between the applicant's qualifications/achievements and the specific criteria for promotion. The Board also provides constructive and developmental recommendations so that the applicant can work towards a successful re-application in the future. For non-unanimous recommendations, the justification also includes a summary of the dissenting opinion(s).

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Board require attendance by all members, and all application materials and internal discussions are confidential. The Board meets twice during the promotion process in accordance with the Promotion Process Timeline. Additional meetings may be required at the discretion of the Board or the CIWRO Director.

- **First Meeting, early November:** At this meeting, the Board performs the initial review of promotion application packages and approves an appropriate list of references for each application that requires one. After this meeting, the Board forwards to the CIWRO office approved lists of references for each application that requires one.
- **Second Meeting, mid-February:** Having previously reviewed all packages, at this meeting, the Board performs the secondary screening and completes the evaluation of promotion applications. For each recommendation, the Board drafts a justification and documents any dissenting votes and opinions. After this meeting, the Board forwards to the CIWRO office a list of incomplete application packages and, for complete application packages, promotion recommendations with the corresponding written justifications.
- **Additional Meetings:** At the discretion of the CIWRO Director, the Board may be convened additional times. Typical reasons for convening additional Board meetings include clarification on non-unanimous Board recommendations, disagreement with one or more Board recommendations, and discussion of appeals. The Board may revise recommendations and justifications based on the discussions at these additional meetings.

CONTACT US

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