



Memorandum

To: CESU Directors and Partners
Through: CESU Network National Coordinator
From: CESU Network Council
Subject: CESU New Member Application and Approval Process
Date: 30 November 2012

As of November 2012, the CESU Network includes 13 federal agencies, more than 240 academic institutions (including 56 minority serving institutions), and over 70 other nonfederal partners (e.g., tribal, state, and local government agencies; museums, aquariums, zoos, and arboretums; nongovernmental conservation organizations). The CESU Network Council welcomes the addition of new partners to the network. Periodic announcements may be issued (e.g., Federal Register notice) to enhance program awareness and direct interested parties to additional information.

As allowed under the CESU Memorandum of Understanding, the CESU Network Council may establish policies guiding the activities of the Network. This memo, therefore, establishes a standard new member application and approval process that is applicable to all Units. Each CESU is expected to implement these steps from this date forward.

Step 1: New Member Application

Interested parties are welcome to contact the CESU Network National Office and individual CESU director at any time with inquiries. The CESU director sets the deadline(s) for receiving an application (e.g., accepts new member applications throughout the year or on a semi-annual or annual basis). Additionally, the CESU director may invite an applicant to attend the annual CESU partner meeting for an in-person presentation and interview as part of the application process.

The following outlines the required elements for the application for enrollment in a particular CESU.

Federal Agency Partners

Federal agency applicants must be members of the CESU Network Council and signatories on the national CESU Network Federal Agency Memorandum of Understanding. These federal agency partners are eligible for enrollment in any individual CESU, to support collaborative activities aligned with the mission and goals of the CESU Network and individual CESU. The steps for the federal agency partner application process are:

1. Notify the CESU Network National Coordinator of intent to enroll in a particular CESU.
2. Establish initial contact with the host university CESU director to begin dialog regarding enrollment as a new federal agency partner.
3. Submit a formal letter of interest and application (e.g., no more than 10 pages) to the host university CESU director including:

- Expression of desire to enroll in the CESU as a new federal agency partner.
- Confirmation that the agency is a member of the CESU Network Council.
- Confirmation that the agency has read the CESU agreement and agrees to support the CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a federal partner, as described in the CESU agreement.
- Description of the federal agency, its mission, and the primary focus of collaborative activities to be supported through the CESU in the context of the CESU mission.
- Description or list of the primary agency programs, departments, or other institutional divisions that will likely be engaged in CESU activities. Include website addresses for further information, as appropriate.
- Agreement to pay the required one-time \$10,000 enrollment fee to support host university CESU administration (e.g., hosting annual meetings, maintaining website, facilitating communications among partners, coordinating periodic reporting).
- Designation of a technical representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve on the CESU’s federal managers committee, participate in CESU annual/semi-annual partner meetings, and facilitate internal and external communication, promotion, and response to CESU correspondence and administrative actions (e.g., announcements, new member applications, processing agreements/amendments, five-year reviews).
- Designation of an administrative or grants and agreements representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve as financial assistance point of contact.
- Agreement to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs among CESU partners.
- Signature (or endorsement) from an appropriate agency official, with authority to commit agency resources in a binding multi-year federal cooperative and joint venture agreement (e.g., agency administrator, regional director, division or branch chief).

Nonfederal Partners

Tribal, state, and local governments, academic institutions, nongovernmental conservation organizations, and other nonfederal organizations are eligible to apply for enrollment in any individual CESU, to participate in collaborative activities aligned with the mission and goals of the CESU Network and individual CESU. (Note: Some CESUs do not currently include nonacademic nonfederal partners.) The steps for the nonfederal partner application process are:

1. Establish initial contact with the host university CESU director to begin dialog regarding enrollment as a new partner institution.
2. Submit a formal letter of interest and application (e.g., no more than 20 pages) to the CESU director including:
 - Expression of desire to enroll in the CESU as a new partner institution/organization.
 - Confirmation that the institution/organization has read the CESU agreement and agrees to support the CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner, as described in the CESU agreement.
 - Description of the institution/organization, its mission, and the primary focus of collaborative activities to be supported through the CESU in the context of the CESU mission.

- Description or list of the primary programs, departments, or other institutional divisions of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will likely be engaged in CESU activities. Include website addresses for further information, as appropriate.
- A list of and brief description of the staff or faculty with expertise in disciplines and subject areas of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies (do not submit CVs).
- For academic institutions, include a description of student demographics and the institution's status as a minority-serving institution (e.g., as defined by the U.S. Department of Education).
- Description or list of facilities, equipment, centers, or institutes that would provide support to the research, technical assistance, or educational activities of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.
- Description or list of past research, technical assistance, and educational services supported through federal financial assistance awards that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.
- Description or list of current formal agreements and informal relationships with federal agencies that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.
- Confirmation of the institution's/organization's willingness to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU, including research, technical assistance, and educational services (this overhead rate applies to the entire institution/organization for CESU activities).
- Designation of a technical representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve on the CESU steering committee, participate in CESU annual/semi-annual partner meetings, and facilitate internal and external communication, promotion, and response to CESU correspondence and administrative actions (e.g., announcements, new member applications, processing agreements/amendments, five-year reviews).
- Agreement to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members (e.g., faculty, students).
- Signature (or endorsement) from an appropriate official, with authority to commit institutional resources in a binding multi-year federal cooperative and joint venture agreement (e.g., president, executive director, chief financial officer, vice president for research, director of sponsored programs).
- Letter(s) of support from one or more CESU federal agency partners sponsoring the new partner's application, including a description of successful past collaborative work supported through federal financial assistance awards.

Step 2: New Member Application Review

Following submission of an application for enrollment, the CESU director distributes the application package (via email) to all existing partner technical representatives for consideration. The CESU director determines the timeline and method for review (e.g., comments via email or in person at the annual meeting).

Step 3: New Member Approval (Nonfederal Applicants only)

Once existing partners have reviewed the new member application, the CESU director solicits a vote in favor/not in favor of selection of the applicant for membership. The CESU director shall determine the timeline and method of voting (e.g., via email or in person at the annual meeting). Voting requires a minimum of a quorum of 50 percent of partners. Approval is determined by a super majority (i.e., two thirds or greater) of returned votes in favor of selection for membership. The CESU director informs the applicant of the outcome of the review and approval process.

Step 4: Amending the Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement

Upon enrollment of a new federal member or approval of a new non-federal member applicant for enrollment, the CESU director sends the application materials (via email) to the CESU Network National Coordinator with instructions to prepare an amendment to the CESU's master agreement. The CESU Network National Office prepares a draft amendment to the CESU master agreement, formally adding the applicant as a new partner. The draft amendment shall be prepared within four weeks of receipt of materials from the CESU director.

Step 5: Amendment Review and Signature Process

The CESU Network National Office sends the draft amendment to the new partner for review and signature. The new partner reviews and processes the amendment, returning the completed signature page by email to the CESU Network National Office. The amendment must be signed by an appropriate official, with authority to commit institutional resources in a binding multi-year federal cooperative and joint venture agreement (e.g., president, executive director, chief financial officer, vice president for research, director of sponsored programs).

Once the completed signature page has been received from the new partner, the CESU Network National Office works with the CESU director to circulate the amendment to existing partners for signatures. Existing partners shall have forty-five (45) days from receipt of the amendment to sign the amendment or provide comments in writing. The amendment is in effect upon receipt of the host institution's signature and 100% of partner signatures or after the 45-day signature period has expired, whichever occurs first. If a partner has not responded within the 45-day signature period, its signature will not be required.

Once the amendment is in effect, the CESU Network National Office works with the CESU director to distribute a digital copy of the fully executed amendment to all existing partners for their files and posts the amendment to the CESU Network national website.

Step 6: New Member Actively Participates

Once the amendment is in effect, the new partner is expected to actively participate in the CESU and CESU Network activities (e.g., support/conduct collaborative projects, respond to CESU correspondence and administrative actions, share announcements/funding opportunities with colleagues, participate in annual/semi-annual partner meetings, disseminate project outputs).