



Procedures for Working with Outside Entities

June 5, 2020

The National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) was established by an Act of Congress in 2000. NORA's mission is to undertake research and development on behalf of the oilheating industry. The oilheating industry is defined as those persons engaged in the production, distribution and sale of oilheat fuel and its affiliated equipment. Additionally, the NORA program is designed to assist end-use consumers of oilheat.

Per the statute, over 30% of all NORA expenditures are oriented towards research and development. Additionally, the statute specifically refers to cost sharing and working with other entities.

NORA should not do any work for hire. When working with outside entities, the programs that are undertaken should be joint initiatives designed to benefit the oilheating industry and its consumers.

NORA must respect confidential business information and intellectual property that may be developed in its research. Generally, all intellectual property issues should be addressed in any contracts for joint work.

There may be projects where NORA is working to develop information for the benefit of the industry and those projects may attract support from other entities wishing to support that research. NORA welcomes support for those projects as well as the technical support that may be provided. In providing this support, outside entities do not, in any way, take ownership of the work unless that has been subject to a specific contract concerning intellectual property.

At the conclusion of any research project, NORA shall make the information available to the industry in a reasonable time frame. As part of its due diligence in finalizing reports and prior to publication or release, the NORA staff will circulate the report to parties who have shown interest, either by expression or by funding the study, and to selected reviewers that will ensure the work is valid.

The time for these reviews will be limited and in no case shall exceed one month.

In response to comments, NORA's Director of Research shall decide whether the comments raise a valid scientific or technical issue and whether the comments should be accepted. The director may also decide that comments or reviews received call into question the validity of the research or report. Upon such determination, the director may decide that deferring or not publishing may be appropriate. The director, on his initiative, may consult with the NORA's president or outside counsel as appropriate. If the comments do not raise a valid scientific issue, the lab director need not respond.

At the conclusion of the review period, the materials, subject to the paragraph above, will be released.