

Request for Proposals

Research, Engineering and Extension: Development of Water Programs of Excellence for fiscal years 2022-2023

Overview

Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research), the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension), and Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station (TEES), are seeking multidisciplinary Program of Excellence proposals that will lead to forward thinking water research and extension activities, and position teams to successfully secure large, competitive, extramural resources. This program is being administered by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI), which is a part of AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension and serves as the AgriLife representative.

Funded projects will include a demonstrated need for the program, engagement of stakeholders, the collection of preliminary data (and/or development of new technologies), and the submission of competitive grant proposals totaling \$2 requested through extramural sources to every \$1 received through the Program of Excellence.

AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and TEES will provide funding across fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

Eligibility

The Program of Excellence initiative will accept proposals from multidisciplinary teams that must include participants from all three agencies — AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension, and TEES — in Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-PI roles. Participants from other colleges within the Texas A&M University System can also be included in the proposal if their involvement is deemed necessary to the success of the project. However, the project PI must hold an appointment in one of the three identified agencies. No funding will be provided to project participants outside the Texas A&M University System.

Priority Areas

The purpose of this initiative is to invest in multidisciplinary teams, or Programs of Excellence, to assist in positioning them to be leaders in emerging fields and successfully secure large, competitive, extramural resources that advance water management in Texas. As such, proposals should consider future needs of water research (and/or technology) and outreach, the trends in state and federal grant programs, and attempt to match Programs of Excellence with anticipated grant program priorities. Additionally, it should be demonstrated in the proposal that stakeholders have been engaged in identifying high priority, future water related needs and to

develop long-term relationships that will be required of some grant programs. One or more Programs of Excellence for the following emerging water resource research and outreach areas may be selected:

- Data science sustaining water management, including artificial intelligence, big data management, the internet of water, etc.,
- Increasing the value of water to support agricultural production (including water used for urban agriculture)
- Increasing economic and social water resilience in urban and/or rural communities

Timeline and Deadlines

The completed application must be e-mailed in PDF format to Danielle Kalisek at Danielle.Kalisek@ag.tamu.edu. Applications must be received electronically by **11:59 p.m. on June 10, 2021** to be considered. Start date of projects will be September 1, 2021. No extensions will be granted.

Project Funding Limitations

Budgets SHALL NOT be routed through SRS since funds are already internal. Requested funding should not exceed \$310,000 per year for a two-year funding period from September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2023, for a total funding request not to exceed \$620,000 per project. It is anticipated that four projects will be selected. Each proposal should have one clearly-identified PI from AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension or TEES, and at least one Co-PI from each of the other two agencies. Fringe benefits, tuition and fees, indirect costs and new hires are not allowed in the budget.

Award Recipient Expectations

Award recipients are expected to participate in quarterly meetings with TWRI and TEES to discuss project expectations and timelines, beginning with a kickoff meeting in September 2021. Awardees will be provided with a quarterly report template that will be due the 15th day of December, March, June and September during the project period. Quarterly meetings will discuss progress reported in the quarterly reports and upcoming activities. Funding in FY 2023 will be contingent on satisfactory progress being made on project objectives and deliverables in FY 2022. Prior to the project end date of August 31, 2023, each awardee will submit a final report, using a template provided, detailing project outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Additionally, each awardee will prepare and submit grant proposals such that there will be two extramural dollars requested for every \$1 received through this program. For example, if a Program of Excellence team receives the full \$620,000, then the team must submit grant proposals to extramural sources requesting at least \$1,240,000. This requirement can be satisfied through a single large grant application or through several smaller grant applications. Additional Co-PI collaborators may participate on extramural grant applications than just who is listed on the Program of Excellence. Grant applications must be submitted before August 31, 2023 and

proof of submission both provided to TWRI and included in the final report. Potential sources of funding shall be identified in section 7 of the project information discussed below.

Contacts

For technical questions regarding the proposal and content, please contact Allen Berthold, Ph.D., at taberthold@ag.tamu.edu.

For budgetary or submission questions, please contact Danielle Kalisek, at Danielle.Kalisek@ag.tamu.edu.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be selected based on: 1) evidence of a demonstrated need from stakeholders; 2) evidence of cohesive, multidisciplinary teams in the proposed research and extension activities; 3) potential impacts and relevance of advancing water resources management in Texas; and 4) a demonstrated plan for leveraging large, competitive state or federal resources.

Proposal Format

Project Information (1 Page for items 1-7):

1. **Title.** Concise but descriptive.
2. **Keywords.** Enter keywords of your choice descriptive of the work.
3. **Start date.** Enter the actual beginning date for the project.
4. **End date.** Enter the estimated end date for the project.
5. **Principal and Co-investigators.** Provide the name, position title, agency, department/unit, email address and phone number of the PI and co-investigators. This must include participants from all three agencies: AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and TEES.
6. **Abstract.** Provide a description of the problem, methods and objectives of the project (300 words or less).
7. **Source of extramural funding planned to be pursued.** Please provide the agency, name of the program within the agency, anticipated release date of the request, maximum total amount of the request and relevant information to the program(s) you anticipate submitting to, such as a web link to more information about the program(s). Recipients can change the program(s) they submit to, but dollar amounts should be similar, and awardees will first consult with TWRI and TEES. Proposals developed as part of this program should not already be in progress but will be new proposals developed by the project team during the performance period that aligns with the project work.

Project Narrative (10 Pages maximum for items 8-12):

8. **Statement of water management problem.** Explain the need for the project by detailing the stakeholder input gathered during or prior to the proposal development process, and how this program will advance water management for these stakeholders. (1 page maximum)
9. **Anticipated project fit of extramural funding.** Please describe how your proposal will fit the priority area identified in the source(s) of extramural funding that has been

identified in section 7. How will successful acquisition and submission of externally funded grants advance water management in Texas? (1 page maximum)

10. **Statement of results or benefits.** Specify how a successful Program of Excellence will position the team for leveraging large, competitive state and federal grants. How will the results of the completion of this project advance water management in Texas? (1 page maximum)
11. **Nature, scope and objectives of the project.** Provide a description of the project goals and objectives, as well as the approach that will be used to achieve these objectives, including a timeline of activities. (5 page maximum)
12. **Methods, procedures and facilities.** Provide enough information to permit evaluation of the technical adequacy of the approach to satisfy the objectives. (2 page maximum)

Additional Information:

13. **Investigator's qualifications.** Include resumes of the principal and co-investigators. Limit each resume to two pages including no more than five relevant publications. (2 pages maximum per investigator)
14. **Investigator Current and Pending.** Include a table of current and pending support for each principal and co-investigator to include: 1) project dates; 2) project title; 3) project sponsor; and 4) amount awarded/requested.
15. **Leveraging of on-going research activities.** If these funds will leverage an on-going research activity, please provide a single paragraph statement summarizing: the existing project title, amount of funding for the existing project, the agency funding the existing project and a brief narrative of how this research activity links to the existing project. (1 page maximum)
16. **Logic Model.** Include a logic model. (2 pages maximum)
17. **Timeline.** Include a timeline of proposed project activities. (1 page maximum)
18. **Project budgets.** *Budgets SHALL NOT be routed through SRS.* Requested project budgets should be prepared using the Budget Template and Budget Narrative Template provided below. Each principal and co-investigator should provide an individually-completed budget and budget narrative. All budgets must be summarized into the budget request budget summary table.

Budget Summary, Template and Narrative

Budget Request Summary

For each Principal and Co-investigator, please provide a fiscal year and overall total.

AgriLife Research	FY 2022	FY 2023	Total
PI or Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
AgriLife Extension	\$	\$	\$
PI or Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
TEES	\$	\$	\$
PI or Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Co-PI	\$	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$	\$

Budget Template

For each Principal and Co-investigator individually, please indicate the appropriate agency and insert the total budget figures into the budget summary under the fiscal year. Fringe benefits, tuition and fees, indirect costs and new hires are not allowed.

Agency:			
Principal or Co-investigator Name:			
Cost Category	FY 2022 Sept 21 – Aug 22	FY 2023 Sept 22 – Aug 23	Total Sept 21 – Aug 23
1. Salaries and Wages	\$	\$	\$
Principal Investigator			
Co-Investigator			
Co-Investigator			
Graduate Student			

2. Supplies	\$	\$	\$
3. Equipment	\$	\$	\$
4. Travel	\$	\$	\$
5. Other costs (including services or consultants)	\$	\$	\$
6. Total estimated costs	\$	\$	\$

Budget Narrative

Fringe benefits, tuition and fees, indirect costs and new hires are not allowed.

Agency:
Principal or Co-investigator Name:
Salaries and Wages. Provide estimated hours and the rate of compensation proposed for each individual.
Supplies. Indicate separately the amounts proposed for office, laboratory, computing and field supplies.
Equipment. Identify non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost of more than \$5,000 per unit.
Travel. Provide purpose and estimated costs for all travel.
Other Direct Costs. Itemize costs not included elsewhere, including services, publication costs, computers, fees, services, consultants, printing, etc. If budgeting a service or consultant, identify the task for which the service is for and estimate the amount of time required and hourly or daily rate.