Full Proposal Guidelines

Full proposal submission deadline is 5:00 PM on November 14, 2018. It is anticipated that notifications will be made by January 9, 2019.

Invited proposals from untenured, tenure-track faculty should be prepared for new research projects of generally one to two years' duration and for modest dollar amounts averaging approximately $26,000 per year. Tuition for the academic year is not charged; no indirect is charged, but recovery of academic year salary is required. The Office of Research Programs (ORP) will assist in drafting the budget template for full proposals. Research support for new projects should be considered as start-up funds, with the expectation that the investigations will lead to proposals for significant, continued research support from outside sponsors. Likelihood of future support will be one aspect of the official proposal review process. Graduate students would receive a tuition scholarship for the academic year, provided that they are appointed to the project as required by the tuition scholarship policy. Two weeks of summer salary is allocated to academic year PIs.

The review and selection of new proposals involves the Vice President for Research and the Academic Governance Committee on Research (COR), which contains representatives from each department to evaluate the proposals. Evaluation will consist of review by the COR, as well as internal and external ad hoc reviewers. The COR will recommend a proportion of the submitted proposals for funding. This recommendation will be carefully considered by the Vice President for Research, who will make the final decisions.

To help guide you to a successful full proposal, this document outlines the review criteria as well as formatting and submission details. To ensure the most fair and favorable review, we ask that you pay close attention to the details contained in this document. You may request clarification on any requested materials by contacting the Vice President for Research, Dr. Christopher Nomura or the chair of the COR, Dr. Lee Newman.

Innovative research proposals addressing one of the core McIntire-Stennis program areas are expected, and those focusing on the contemporary issues and research priorities are especially encouraged. When detailing the fit of your proposed research to the McIntire-Stennis Program, do not identify all possible areas your research touches upon, but do elaborate on the key area addressed by your research.

The PIs for proposals selected for funding will be required to review a Project Initiation Report, and enter Annual Progress Report(s) and a Final Report into the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) REEport system. REEport is NIFA’s singular grant and formula project reporting system, building on and replacing the existing CRIS web forms system. REEport uses the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR), a standard progress report format that all Federal research agencies are required to use.
Review Criteria

As a tool to assist both the ad hoc and internal reviewers in the evaluation of each proposal the following review criteria will be assigned a numeric score. The relative weight of each criterion (indicated in parentheses) and key considerations (bulleted points) are given below. However, at the Internal Panel Level, recommendations for funding will be made using the official USDA-AFRI proposal-ranking categories identified below.

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<th>Recommended for Funding - Outstanding</th>
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<td>Recommended for Funding – High Priority</td>
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<td>Recommended for Funding – Medium Priority</td>
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<td>Not Recommended for Funding – Low Priority</td>
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<td>Not Recommended for Funding – Do Not Fund</td>
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**Scientific Merit (25%)**
- Provide adequate literature review showing novelty, innovation, and originality.
- Significantly advance the current state of knowledge
- Provide clarity and delineation of objectives.
- Supply adequate description of the undertaking and key considerations.
- Document that conceptual adequacy of the research, extension, and education components (as applicable).
- Where model systems are used, showability to transfer knowledge gained from these systems to organisms of importance to U.S. forestry.

**Broader significance (25%)**
Evaluating the broader significance of a proposal may include:
- Identification of potential benefits of the proposed activity to society.
- Determination of whether or not there is evidence that the results will be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding
- Identification of how well the activity advance discovery and understanding, while promoting teaching, training and learning
- Establishing if the proposed research enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships
- Deciding if the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)?
- Asking how well do the research, extension, and educational activities advance priority areas identified under the McIntire-Stennis program?

**Technical feasibility (25%)**
- Demonstrated awareness of previous and alternative approaches to the problem identified in the proposal.
- Suitability of methodology to the research question.
- Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary data.
- Adequacy of available or obtainable support personnel, facilities, instrumentation and other critical resources.
- Budget adequately supports the proposed research in terms of duration, personnel, supplies, travel, and other support.
- Time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives.
Likelihood of leading to future funding (15%)  
- Identification of specific and appropriate funding programs (e.g., specific RFPs not just names of agencies).
- Awareness of how proposed study will assist in securing future funding.
- Identification of how proposed study fits into larger research program.

Qualifications of the research team (10%)  
- Qualifications of applicant(s) to conduct the proposed project, including performance record and potential for future accomplishments.
- Expertise in each area of study objectives is represented by PIs or identified collaborators (supported by letters).

Responsiveness to previous reviewer comments will also be considered when applicable.  
- Specific statements that indicate how all previous comments from previous proposals have been addressed in the current full proposal.

Please note that in 2009, CSREES and the USDA identified these key issues facing forest management today:
- Ecological restoration;
- Catastrophe management;
- Valuing and trading ecological services;
- Energy conservation, biomass energy and bio-based materials development;
- Forest fragmentation;
- Carbon sequestration and climate change; and
- Ways of fostering healthy forests and a globally competitive forest resources sector;

They further identified the following issues of high research priority:
- Science of integration (ecosystem or landscape approaches including interdisciplinary multi-state projects);
- Forest ecosystem services;
- Human attitudes and behaviors;
- Conflict, uncertainty, and decision-making;
- Technological advancements (biotechnology, nanotechnology, and geospatial technology), productivity, and forest applications; and
- Urban ecosystems.

The following core program areas were also outlined in the 1962 Act:
1. Reforestation and management of land for timber and other products;
2. Management of forest watersheds to improve water flow and protect against erosion;
3. Management of forest and rangelands for forage production and improvement of wildlife habitat;
4. Management of forest land for outdoor recreation;
5. Protection of forest land against fire, insects, disease and other destructive agents;
6. Utilization of wood and other forest products;
7. Development of sound policies for management, marketing and harvesting of forest products;
8. Other studies necessary to obtain the fullest and most effective use of forest resources.

The extent to which proposals address these priority areas will be considered in making funding decisions.

## Technical Guidelines

Although this is an “internal” program on behalf of ESF, technical guidelines for proposal development have been adapted from the requirements for proposal submissions to the National Science Foundation (NSF). As with submissions to NSF, failure to comply with these guidelines may result in the proposal being returned without review.

### General format

The proposal must be clear, readily legible, and conform to the following requirements:

**File format**

Entire proposal emailed as a single PDF file to Linda McNamara ([llmcnama@esf.edu](mailto:llmcnama@esf.edu)) in the Office of Research Programs. This single document must contain all the listed elements indicated below (cover sheet, project narrative, required supporting information).

**Type face**

Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger. Smaller font sizes are allowed for mathematical formulas, equations, figures, tables, or diagram captions, but must remain readable, and must print clearly. Although minimum font sizes are indicated, readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in the selection of appropriate font size.

**Margins**

Margins, in all directions, must be at least one inch.

**Line spacing**

The cover sheet and project narrative must be **double-spaced**. The list of references, CVs, and other supporting documents may be **single-spaced**.

**Page limit**

The cover sheet and project narrative are strictly limited to **10 Pages** conforming to the font size, margin, and spacing requirements. This limit does not include the list of references, CVs, formal budget and additional documentation, each of which may have additional page restrictions (as indicated below). Proposals that do not follow these guidelines will be returned without review.

### Cover Sheet

The first page of your 10-page project narrative must include the following:

**Title of proposed work**

Title must be brief, scientifically or technically valid, intelligible to scientifically or technically literate readers not in your field,

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and suitable for use in the public press. We reserve the right to edit the title of a project prior to making an award.

**Principal Investigator(s)**

Name, title, and departmental affiliation of each PI and co-PI. Again, the PI for the proposals is limited to untenured, tenure track faculty. However, co-PIs do not have any restrictions as to rank or tenure status. Project cooperators should be identified elsewhere, within the narrative itself (as appropriate), and letters of support from cooperators should be included as additional material (see below).

**Budget and Duration**

The budget and proposed duration must be consistent with the nature and complexity of the proposed activity, must not exceed $26,000 per year, and should encompass 1-2 years. We reserve the right to reduce the amount and duration of the proposed budget prior to making an award.

**Proposal Status**

Indicate whether this is a first submission, or re-submission from a previous year.

**Project Summary**

A summary of the proposed activity suitable for publication, must not continue past the first page. This should not be an abstract of the proposal, but rather a self-contained description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded. The summary should be written in the third person and include a statement of the objectives and methods to be employed. It must clearly address in separate statements (within the summary) the intellectual merit of the proposed activity and the broader impacts resulting from the proposed activity. It should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and, as much as possible, should be made understandable to a scientifically or technically literate reader.

**Project Narrative (9 page limit)**

The project narrative should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and must explicitly include the following (although these need not be specific sub-titles):

**Justification**

Present a compelling argument for why the work is important, why it needs to be done at this time, and how public welfare or scientific knowledge will be advanced.

**Previous work, present outlook, and future prospects**

Summarize relevant research (citing important publications), status of current research, and the additional knowledge needed that the project is expected to provide. Set the proposed work within the framework of a long-term research plan to elucidate how the proposed work may lead to significant future funding.

**Objectives**

A clear, complete and logically arranged statement of the hypotheses and/or questions to be addressed/tested and of the specific results to be achieved by the project.
Procedure

A statement of the essential working plans and methods to be used in attaining each of the stated objectives. Procedures should correspond to the objectives and follow the same order. Phases of the work to be undertaken in different time periods should be indicated. Location of the work and facilities and equipment needed and available should be indicated. Wherever appropriate, the procedure should produce data suitable for statistical analysis, and the appropriate analysis should be identified. The procedure should reflect careful planning and provide flexibility if changes become necessary.

Probable duration and timetable

An estimate of the maximum time likely to be required to complete the project and publish results should be provided on a timeline. List major activities and objectives. The following format should be used for the timeline, with years across the top and task name down the side. Indicate time spent on each task by shading, x, or other means. The years should be projected quarterly. The following is an example of the format for the timeline:

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<th>Task Name</th>
<th>2018</th>
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After awards are determined, any material change in the objectives or timeline will require a revised project outline be submitted to the ORP.

Budget justification

Estimated annual allocations for salaries (Research Project Assistants--graduate students, technical help, post-docs), and supplies, travel, equipment, and other operating costs. The total annual budget is not to exceed $26,000, and projects should generally be of one to two years’ duration. Also covered, but not charged against the annual budget maximum is (1) an academic year tuition scholarship for one 50% RPA per project year; (2) a percentage of the PI and co-PI’s effort; and (3) two weeks summer salary for the PI (per project year) for those PI’s on academic-year appointments. The ORP will assist in drafting the budget template (which is required under supporting materials, but should not be included within the budget justification section).

Personnel

Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of each member of the research team.

Cooperators

List any cooperating Federal or State agencies, institutions, or private partners in this research. Letters of support should be included to substantiate critical resources or technical support.
Future funding plans

Identify specific and appropriate funding programs (e.g. specific RFPs not just names of agencies)

Required Supporting Information

The following required information does not count against the 10-page limit of the cover sheet and project narrative, but may have additional page limits as indicated below.

References

Reference information is required. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the document is available electronically, the website address should also be identified. Proposers must be especially careful to follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials. There is no estimated page limitation for the references, but generally this section should not exceed two, single-spaced pages.

Budget

The ORP will assist with the proper budget template, which must be embedded within the single PDF application file.

Responses to previous reviews previously submitted

Indicate how previous criticisms (if any) have been addressed in this proposal. Please address criticisms or any comments on related or previously submitted proposals. Responses should not exceed two pages.

Record of success with previous McIntire-Stennis funding (Applies to Lead PI only)

If applicable, include a one-page summary that identifies the specific timeline of previous McIntire-Stennis awards (duration and specific years of award), along with the publications and additional lines of research funding that stemmed from the initial grant (Applies to Lead PI only)

Potential reviewers

Additional reviewers will be sought by the COR, including reviewers external to ESF. Lead PI must provide names and contact information for three (or more) potential reviewers outside of the ESF faculty that are qualified to review your proposal. Please also identify any potential reviewers within ESF who would have a conflict of interest if asked to review the proposal. You may additionally identify persons you wish us not to ask to review.

Biographical sketches

A biographical sketch (strictly limited to 2 pages) is required for each individual identified as PI or co-PI, and must include the following information in the order and format specified below:

Professional Preparation
Postdoctoral Institution(s)       Area       Inclusive Dates
Graduate Institution(s)         Major       Degree & Year
Undergraduate Institution(s)    Major       Degree & Year
Appointments
A list, in reverse chronological order, of all the individual’s academic/professional appointments beginning with the present.

Publications
A list of up to 5 publications most closely related to the proposed project, and up to 5 other significant publications, whether or not related to the proposed project (see references cited for format). For unpublished manuscripts, list only those submitted or accepted for publication (along with most likely date of publication). Patents, copyrights, and software systems developed may be substituted for publications. Additional lists of publications, invited lectures, etc. must not be included.

Synergistic Activities
A list of up to 5 examples that demonstrate the broader impact of the individual’s professional and scholarly activities that focus on integration, transfer of knowledge, and creativity. Examples could include, among others, innovations in teaching and training; development or refinement of research tools; computation methodologies and algorithms for problem-solving; development of databases to support research and education; broadening the participation of groups underrepresented in science; mathematics, engineering and technology; and service to the scientific and engineering community outside of the individual’s immediate organization.

Current and Pending Research Funding (Applies to Lead PI only)
List your currently funded research and those proposals in review by funding agencies. Include the title, list of co-PIs, amount, award dates, and funding agency.

Additional Supporting Materials (optional)
The following materials may also be included in your single PDF submission, and do not have any page length restrictions.

Supporting letters
Letters of support should be included to substantiate critical resources or technical support provided by cooperators, commercial or academic research labs (either external or internal to ESF), and to substantiate the availability of shared equipment.

Assurance Statement (required after funding approval)
Institutions receiving U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) funding are responsible for protecting human subjects, providing humane treatment of animals and monitoring use of recombinant DNA. CSREES policy requires an assurance that appropriate committees in each institution have carried out the initial review of protocol and that an appropriate committee issues an approval or exemption (see next page). If you are awarded funding, you need to acquire proper approvals for carrying out the intended work prior to the release of funds. Any material change to the methods required by the appropriate signing committees will require a revised project narrative be submitted to the ORP for consideration. We retain the right to rescind an offer of funding if you are unable to acquire the appropriate approvals, or if approval requires material and undesirable alteration of the project objectives or viability. Please contact the appropriate institutional committee chair if you have questions regarding this requirement.
STATEMENT OF POLICY - Institutions receiving CSREES funding for research are responsible for protecting human subjects, providing humane treatment of animals, and monitoring use of recombinant DNA. To provide for the adequate discharge of this responsibility, CSREES policy requires an assurance by the institution’s Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) that appropriate committees in each institution have carried out the initial reviews of protocol and will conduct continuing reviews of supported projects. CSREES also requires AOR certification by citing a timely date that an appropriate committee issued an approval or exemption.

NOTE: Check appropriate statements, supplying additional information when necessary.

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<tr>
<th>1. Institution</th>
<th>SUNY - ESF - Syracuse, NY</th>
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<td>2. Project number</td>
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<td>3. Project director</td>
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### A. BIOSAFETY OF RECOMBINANT DNA

- [ ] Project does not involve recombinant DNA
- [ ] Project involves recombinant DNA and was either approved or determined to be exempt from the NIH Guidelines by an Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) on [Date].

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with both the intent and procedures of the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH), DHHS Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules as revised.

### B. CARE AND USE OF ANIMALS

- [ ] Project does not involve use of vertebrate animals.
- [ ] Project involves use of vertebrate animals and was approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) on [Date].

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with the Animal Welfare Act (7USC, 2131-2156), Public Law 89-544, 1996, as amended, and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the Secretary of Agriculture in 9 CFR Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4. In the case of domesticated farm animals housed under farm conditions, the institutions shall adhere to the principles stated in the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching, Federation of Animal Science Societies, 1999.

### C. PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

- [ ] Project does not involve use of human subjects.
- [ ] Project involves use of human subjects and
  - [ ] Was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) on [Date]. Performing institution holds a Federalwide assurance number [_____]; if not, a Single Project Assurance is required.
  - [ ] Is exempt based on exemption number [_____]
  - [ ] Specific plans involving human subjects depend upon completion of survey instruments, prior animal studies, or development of material or procedures. No human subjects will be involved in research until approved by the IRB and a revised form CSREES-2008 is submitted.

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with the Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects as set forth in 45 CFR Part 46, 1991, as amended, and USDA regulations set forth in 7 CFR 1c, 1992. All nonexempt research involving human subjects must be approved and under continuing review by an IRB. If the performing organization submits a Single Project Assurance, supplemental information describing procedures to protect subjects from risks is required.

**Signature of Authorized Organizational Representative**

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