Fellows Grant Program
2025 Call for Proposals

Submission Deadline, March 07th, 2025, 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

Submit by email at wrdc@uidaho.edu
Project funding limit: $15,000
Project time limit: one (1) year
Funding decisions announced: First week of April 2025
Total funding available: $30,000

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Fellows Grant Program

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) funds proposals that present innovative research and educational outreach to advance rural development in the Western United States. Only faculty from Land Grant Institutions in the Western Region are eligible for the Fellows Program.

Fellows' grant proposals can focus on research, extension, or combining both. Proposals must address local research and educational outreach needs, with a special emphasis on underserved communities, understudied geographic locations, or unexplored topics. This grant program aims to build local capacity to address critical emerging issues affecting Western rural communities.

WRDC Fellows collaborate closely with the WRDC to pursue impactful research or outreach education that directly benefits rural communities in the Western Region. During their project term, Fellows are expected to engage with local stakeholders, community leaders, and other relevant parties to ensure that their projects align with the specific needs and priorities of the communities or issues they serve. This collaborative approach helps to foster a sense of partnership and shared purpose, enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the initiatives undertaken.

The standard appointment period for a WRDC Fellow is one year, during which time they will have access to various WRDC resources and support services. This may include assistance with project planning and implementation, opportunities for professional development, and access to a network of experts and practitioners in rural development. Fellows are encouraged to disseminate their findings and share best practices through WRDC's communication channels, such as newsletters, website articles, webinars, and conferences, to amplify the impact of their work.

Each WRDC Fellow is awarded $15,000, which can be used to cover various project-related expenses. These may include salary support, fringe benefits, travel costs for fieldwork or conferences, and other project-related expenses.

About the WRDC

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four rural development centers established by Congress's Rural Development Act of 1972. It is a collaborative effort between the United States Department of Agriculture and the University of Idaho. The core of its funding comes from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The WRDC works with public universities in the Western region to conduct research-based studies and educational outreach programs. It also partners with local communities, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, families, farmers, and ranchers to address various rural development issues. The center's objective is to enhance the research and extension capacity of the region's land-grant universities to help rural communities thrive in today's world. The WRDC works with the other three Regional Rural Development Centers in the country to achieve their shared mission.

Western Land-Grant Institutions:

American Samoa Community College, College of Micronesia, Colorado State University, Montana State University, New Mexico State University, Northern Marianas College, Oregon State University, University of Alaska, University of Arizona, University of California, University of Guam, University of Hawaii, University of Idaho, University of Nevada, University of Wyoming, Utah State University, Washington State University, Blackfoot Community College, Chief Dull Knife College, Dine College, Fort Belknap College, Fort Peck Community College, Institute of American Indian Arts, Little Big Horn College, Navajo Technical College, Northwest Indian College, Salish Kootenai College, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Stone Child College, and Tohono O'odham Community College.

Proposal Instructions

Proposals are submitted by email at wrdc@uidaho.edu. To ensure your submission is complete, please review the submission checklist at the end of this Call of Proposal, on page 4.

All the components in the checklist should be compiled together or in separate documents but should be sent through **one email** with the following email subject: "Fellows_[name of main PI]_[State(s) or University(ies) acronym(s)]. Likewise, files should be named under a similar setup. Files can be either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format.

Example: Fellows_Joe_Doe_AK.pdf

WRDC will reject incomplete proposals and those that do not follow the instructions. Ensure all sections are submitted by the deadline.

While applicants can submit multiple proposals, only one application per individual is eligible for funding in each WRDC competitive program during a grant-funding cycle. However, an exception applies to the Graduate Student program, where a PI can receive multiple project awards as the main advisor of graduate student(s). Winning Graduate Student awards does not prevent the PI from receiving awards in other WRDC grant programs within the same cycle.

Cover Page

The cover page must include:
- Project title
- A list of cooperating institutions if any

- A project summary (300 words max). A clear and concise summary is crucial in the review process. It should outline the problem and propose an innovative solution. The summary will be available to the public if the proposal is funded. The summary must include:
    - Identified problem or research question(s)
    - Describe the research components and explain how your project will creatively address the identified problem or research questions.
    - Identify the potential significance of the project and expected outcomes
    - Explain how your project will disseminate results.
    - Identify potential funding sources to expand the project (be precise).

Project Narrative
The project narrative section may not exceed 4 pages using 12-point Times New Roman font with single-line spacing (i.e., no more than six lines per vertical inch), including all figures and tables and 1-inch margins.

The project narrative must include, but is not limited to, the following sections:
- **Introduction:** Include a clear statement of the proposed project's long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives. Summarize the body of knowledge or past activities, if any, that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project. For example, estimates of issues' magnitude and relevance to Western stakeholders. Explain why it is important to the Western Region.
- **Approach:** For each research and extension objective, describe what will be done, including **methods** and **materials.** Describe the activities and expected results. How extension and education activities, if applicable, will be evaluated. How data will be analyzed or interpreted. Your plans to communicate results to appropriate audiences, including relevant scientific peers, stakeholders, and the public, as appropriate.
- **Benefits:** Briefly explain the project's benefits for you and the Western region.

Bibliography & References Cited
There is no page limit. All work cited in the text should be referenced in this application section. All references must be complete, including titles and all co-authors, conform to an acceptable journal format, and be listed in alphabetical order using the first author's last name or listed by number in the order of citation.

Project Team Members and Roles
Provide a Biographical Sketch (3 pages max) describing your background and expertise to demonstrate that you have the appropriate skills to complete the proposed project. We recommend you follow the NSF-approved format found here: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp.

Describe all team members' roles at all stages of the project. For each project objective, indicate who will be responsible and which team member(s) will be involved in the research and dissemination activities.

Letters of Stakeholder Support
Attach letter(s) of support from stakeholder individuals and/or organizations that support the proposed research and education activities. These letters are optional but will strengthen the proposal.

Budget and Budget Justification
The WRDC does not allow indirect costs. Funding is for up to $15,000 per project. The budget justification detail should follow the same order as the budget. While you should provide information for each item of the budget, you must justify the following budget categories, where applicable: salaries, fringe, equipment, supplies, travel, contractual, and other direct cost categories.

Program Income: If an applicant wishes to generate program income through activities proposed in their project, this must be included in the proposal. Specifically, an applicant must address the following questions:

- How will the program income be generated?
- How much program income is anticipated?
- How will generating program income benefit the project?
- How will the program income be utilized?
- When will the program income be generated during the project period, and will there be sufficient time to expend it?

Please include these details in the **budget justification** section of the proposal so that reviewers and the WRDC staff can objectively evaluate the budget in relation to the proposed activities.

If a current WRDC subrecipient **DID NOT** include program income in their grant proposal, the PI, Authorized Official, or fiscal officer must request **prior approval** from WRDC to generate program income at least 30 days before program income is generated. Full details about program income can be found in the USDA-NIFA Policy Guide. See section V. Post award Federal Requirements, E. Program Income.

Timeline
Provide a timeline, such as a Gantt chart or other detailed breakdown for accomplishing each project objective. Identify the major milestones and activities that will be completed, and when each of those milestones or activities will occur and how they relate back to the objective(s).

Data Managment Plan
The data management plan should outline how data that you collect will be handled throughout the project and after its completion. You should describe how the data will be acquired, managed, analyzed and stored. It should address how data storage will be compliant with regulations and address how the awardee plans to address sharing and reuse.

The proposal submission will have two steps. In the first step (pre-proposals) you will only need to submit the documents in the submission checklist below:

Submission Checklist

- ✓ Cover page
- ✓ Project Narrative
- ✓ Bibliography & References Cited
- ✓ Project Team Members and Roles
- ✓ Biographical Sketches of all team members
- ✓ Letters of Stakeholder Support (optional)
- ✓ Budget and Budget Justification
- ✓ Timeline

Accepted projects will have to provide the following documents later on:

- ✓ Data Management Plan
- ✓ Statement of responsibility
- ✓ Subrecipient form