



# USWBSI's Annual Request for Pre-Proposals (RFP)



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pre-Proposal Preparation, Submission and Award Notification Updated: 7/31/17

The FAQ addresses common mistakes made during both the preparation and submission of individual Research Area Pre-Proposals and Proposed Research Projects submitted to a Coordinated Project.

### **A**

#### **Award Notifications**

**When will I know the funding outcome of my submitted pre-proposal(s)?**

Award Notifications are normally distributed in mid-January. Notifications are sent directly to the Principal Investigator (PI). The notification will include the USWBSI's funding recommendation for all proposed research projects/pre-proposals submitted by a PI.

### **C**

#### **Collaborative Projects (CP) - Proposed Research Project (PRP) or Individual Pre-Proposals**

**Individual budget requests for collaborating PIs.**

Individual budget justification forms from all collaborating PIs should be included in the submitted collaborative proposed research project or individual project pre-proposal. The Multi-PI Budget Worksheet (Excel file converted to PDF) should be used in place of the single budget page included with the proposal forms.

**Common mistakes made during preparation and submission of pre-proposals.**

**Budget Page – Intent to attend Forum not indicated (F. Domestic Travel section of Budget).**

PI must indicate his/her intention to attend the USWBSI's Annual Forum to be held during the Award Year by checking either 'Yes' or 'No' in Section F.

**Budget Page – Indirect Cost Rate (IDC) rate not entered into Section J.**

PI must enter IDC rate in designated area in Section J.

**Cover Page for Individual Project Pre-Proposals – no designation of Research Area(s).**

In Box 13, PI must designate one research area for which the submitted pre-proposal best fits.

**Collaborative Arrangements - letters of intent missing from pre-proposals (Individual Pre-Proposals only).**

If the proposed work involves collaborative arrangements, letters of intent from collaborators (including letters from Co-Investigators) must be included with the submitted pre-proposals. The letter of intent (may be in the form of an email) must include specific details describing the services the collaborator will provide.

**Curriculum Vitae and Publication List - exceeds maximum page limit per scientist.**

A limit of four-pages is allowed for the Curriculum Vitae and Publication List (combined) of PIs and Co-Investigators.

**Exceeding Page Limits.**

Proposed Research Projects - The Plan of Work should NOT exceed 4 pages in length included tables and figures.

Individual Pre-Proposals - The page limit for the Project Description is 10 pages total (up to five pages for text plus additional pages for graphics (i.e. tables and figures). When graphics or tables are inserted throughout the text rather than at the end of the Project Description, PIs sometimes exceed the text limitation (five full pages). The total amount of text in the Project Description can be less than five pages, but it cannot total more than five pages (even if graphics are included throughout text). The Project Description includes the following sections: Title, Introduction, Rationale and Significance, Research Methods and Materials (includes expected results).

## **Non-conformance to instructions regarding formatting.**

Proposed Research Project - The Plan of Work should be formatted using Times New Roman (Normal type except headings), 12 point or higher with one-inch margins.

Individual Pre-Proposals - The Project Description should be formatted using Times New Roman (Normal type except headings), 12 point or higher with one-inch margins.

All Categories: Bold formatting should only be used for section headings or used minimally to emphasize importance or significance. Conformance to the format requirements will be strictly enforced.

## **Confidentiality**

### **How is my submitted pre-proposal handled so that confidentiality is maintained?**

Pre-proposals submitted to the USWBSI are treated as confidential documents. Pre-proposals are only viewed by the administrative staff of the Networking & Facilitation Office, and Reviewers. The Reviewers are instructed prior to their review that the content of all pre-proposals are confidential and thus should be handled accordingly. The NFO securely stores original pre-proposals for at least two years.

## **Current and Pending Support**

### **Who should submit a Current and Pending Support Page?**

A separate Current and Pending Support page should be submitted by the PI and all Co-PIs.

### **What is the difference between the two columns with subheadings "Total \$ amount" and "PI Allocation."**

Grant awards may be divided among Investigators (PI and CO-PI), whereby the Total amount of the award may be different than the amount allocated each investigator (including PI). These columns should be used to indicate this type of scenario.

## D

### Deadlines

#### Where can I find important deadlines?

Commodity-based or VDHR-Uniform Nursery CP Proposed Research Projects – Page 17 in Section 1 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19\\_rfp\\_section1\\_deadlines.pdf](https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19_rfp_section1_deadlines.pdf).

FHB Management's Integrated Management (IM-CP) Proposed Research Project – Page 26 in Section 2 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19\\_rfp\\_section2\\_deadlines.pdf](https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19_rfp_section2_deadlines.pdf).

Individual Research Area Pre-Proposals – Page 34 in Section 3 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19\\_rfp\\_section3\\_deadlines.pdf](https://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy18-19_rfp_section3_deadlines.pdf).

### Deviation Authorization

#### What is the process for requesting authorization of a deviation from the RFP Pre-proposal preparation instructions?

The NFO must authorize any deviations from the RFP instructions in advance of pre-proposal submission. Deviations may be authorized by receiving written approval from the NFO Director ([dvs@uky.edu](mailto:dvs@uky.edu)) or Administrator ([nfo@scabusa.org](mailto:nfo@scabusa.org)). Requests for deviation of guidelines should be submitted in writing via e-mail to either the NFO Director or the Administrator prior to submission of the pre-proposal.

## E

### Electronic Pre-Proposal Submission (EPS) System

#### Do I have to submit my pre-proposal electronically?

All individual pre-proposals (Category 3) and supporting documents will be submitted using the EPS system. PIs submitting to a Coordinated Project (Categories 1 and 2) will upload their supporting documents (i.e. CV/Pubs List and Current and Pending Support (CPS) Form) to the EPS System.

## **Can I change the title of my proposed research project after I have completed the Pre-Registration step of the EPS Process?**

In short, yes. The title provided during the Pre-Registration simply acts as a ‘placeholder’ for the PI’s pre-proposal within the EPS system. Forward the confirmation e-mail you received to the NFO with the updated title included.

## **F**

### **Funding**

#### **If my proposed project is awarded funding, how will I receive my award?**

Funding awarded to PIs (only those not affiliated with USDA-ARS) who submitted pre-proposals to the USWBSI comes in the form of an Extramural Agreement between the PIs institution and USDA-ARS. For ARS scientists, the award will be ‘deposited’ into their CRIS account.

#### **How is approved funding handled on a Collaborative Project?**

If you are part of a collaborative project, and your proposed project is approved for funding, the funding will come in the form of a direct award from USDA-ARS to you at your institution.

#### **What is the USWBSI’s funding cycle for this RFP (FY18-19)?**

The majority of proposed research and budget requests should be based on two years. There are budget related forms for both Year 1 (FY18) and Year 2 (FY19) included in the pre-proposal forms/documents.

## **I**

### **Images for Figures/Tables**

#### **Is there a limit on the size of images?**

Digital images inserted into the Plan of Work/Project Description must only be included within the page limits (see RFP sections for specific page limits). The maximum size of images to be included should be approximately 1200 x 1500 pixels using 256 colors. Figures must be readable as printed on an 8.5” x 11” page at normal (100%) scale.

## Indirect Cost Rate

### What is the Indirect Cost Rate (IDC) for pre-proposals submitted to the USWBSI?

Because Fusarium head blight is such a severe problem for the U.S. wheat and barley industries, the USWBSI's review process focuses on the **competitiveness of total** projects costs (i.e. direct and indirect) to maximize total funding used for research. USDA has set a limit that IDC cost **shall not exceed 22%** of total funds requested. **NOTE:** Indirect Costs are not applicable to ARS PIs (currently ARS PIs funded under the USWBSI are based in CA, KS, MN, MT, ND and NC).

## L

### Letter of Intent (LOI) for a Coordinated Project

#### Where should I send my Letter of Intent for a Coordinated Project?

Letters of Intent should be sent electronically via e-mail to the Chair/Coordinator of the Coordinated Project with a copy going to the Networking & Facilitation Office.

## P

### Pre-Proposal Section (Individual RA Pre-Proposals – Category 3)

#### Cover Page – Do I need to complete all sections (i.e. boxes)?

Sections (i.e. boxes) 1 through 14 must be completed.

#### What information should be included in the "References to Project Description" section of the proposal?

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/book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the document is available electronically, the Website address also should be identified. PIs must be especially careful to follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the proposal.

While there is no established page limitation for the references, this section must include bibliographic citations only, and must not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the project description.

## Project Summary (All Categories)

All four items listed below **must be addressed** in the Project Summary:

- Overall project goal(s)
- Project Objectives (list in numbered format) and Expected Outcomes;
- Plans to accomplish project goal(s) within period of proposed work; and
- Statement of Mutual Interest (i.e. how will stakeholders/end-users benefit from this research).

## R

### Rejections

#### **What do I do if my proposed research was rejected for inclusion in one of the Coordinated Projects?**

PIs have the option, if their proposed research has been rejected by a CP, to submit an individual project pre-proposal for consideration by following the instructions for Category 3 Pre-Proposals beginning on page 34 of the FY18-19 RFP.

### Returned Pre-Proposals

#### **For what reasons does the USWBSI/NFO return a pre-proposal?**

Pre-proposals may not be considered by the USWBSI for the following reasons.

1. The pre-proposal/proposed research project does not meet preparation requirements, such as page limitations, or formatting instructions as specified in the RFP Guidelines.
2. The pre-proposal/proposed research project does not meet the announced deadline date and/or time, where specified.

## S

### Signatures

#### **Does the USWBSI require Authorized Organizational Representative's signature (including electronic) on pre-proposals?**

No. The USWBSI does NOT require signatures by the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs) on pre-proposals, therefore AORs will not be granted

access to the EPS system. If a pre-proposal or proposed research project requires approval prior to submission by PIs sponsored programs office, a Cover Page under 'Special Forms' may be downloaded from the FY18-19 RFP website ([https://scabusa.org/research\\_rfp18-19](https://scabusa.org/research_rfp18-19)) for obtaining AORs approval.

## **Small Business Innovated Research (SBIR) Fee**

### **Is the SBIR fee applicable to me?**

Only USDA-ARS scientists are exempt from the SBIR fee.

### **Am I required to incorporate the SBIR fee into my budget?**

All non-ARS PIs are advised to incorporate the SBIR fee into their budget requests. If the fee is not incorporated into the budget request, and the proposed research is recommended for funding, ARS will subtract the fee from the USWBSI's recommended amount prior to issuing the award. The SBIR fee rate for FY18-19 is 3.2% of total direct and indirect costs.

## **T**

### **Travel**

#### **Is travel to Canada and Mexico considered Domestic Travel?**

No, travel to Canada and Mexico is Foreign Travel (outside the U.S.).

### **Tuition Remission**

#### **Can tuition remission costs for graduate students be included in the proposed budget?**

Tuition remission is **permitted** under USDA-ARS **extramural agreements** with any type of recipient organization (i.e. universities). If tuition remission is budgeted as a direct cost, it should be included in the "Other Direct Costs" category of the Budget Page (Section H).