



## **BIOAg Program: Request for Proposals**

*The Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources (CSANR) Biologically-Intensive Agriculture and Organic Farming (BIOAg) program builds sustainable agriculture for healthy farms, communities, and ecosystems by fostering the development, understanding, and use of biologically-intensive and organic strategies.*

*Sustainable agriculture is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.*

### **Goal:**

The goal of this proposal solicitation is to engage a broad spectrum of WSU faculty in interdisciplinary projects that further the development, understanding, and use of biologically-intensive and/or organic principles, practices, and technologies to improve the sustainability of agriculture and food systems in Washington State. Addressing critical issues, facing global grand challenges, and producing meaningful change will require both interdisciplinary teams that cross departments, colleges, natural/social/economic sciences; and integration of WSU's mission areas of research, extension, and education. Collaboration among research, extension, and teaching faculty, and non-WSU entities (producers, agencies, non-profit organizations) is encouraged in both project development and in translating results into impacts. In addition, BIOAg funding is used to meet three objectives: to *stimulate* new research initiatives, to *augment critical gaps* in existing areas of knowledge, and to *move existing, game-changing research out into the real world*.

### **Context:**

The challenges and demands for sustainable agriculture and food systems are ever increasing. Rising input costs, climate change, environmental consequences of farming and transportation, and socioeconomic effects of farm policy are just a few of the pressures on our natural resources, infrastructure, and people engaged in agriculture and the larger food system. The BIOAg Program was established through a collaborative effort of WSU CSANR and concerned Washington stakeholders with the goal of meeting these grand challenges and building sustainable agriculture and food systems by developing, verifying, and furthering the use of effective biologically-intensive or organic strategies on all types of farms and all aspects of *Washington's* agriculture and food systems. The BIOAg program seeks not only incremental improvements, but transformative ideas that redesign farm or food systems to improve sustainability.

## **BIOAg Topics for FY16:**

Priority topic areas for FY16 (not an exclusive list):

- Biologically-intensive and organic approaches to:
  - Building soil quality (\*see below);
  - Enhancing whole farm or food system sustainability;
  - Improving livestock and animal health; or
  - Organic waste management.
- Novel approaches to weed, disease, pest and/or fertility management that transcend traditional conventional or organic approaches; and that seek to exploit and integrate biological, chemical and physical processes.
- Innovation and diversification to increase the resiliency and sustainability of farming and food systems in the face of climate change, volatile energy markets, or challenging economic conditions.
- Breeding, varietal selection, management practices, processing, or marketing practices to increase food quality, nutrition, safety, or access; or to reduce waste throughout the food system.
- Assessments of the environmental, economic, and/or social sustainability of agriculture and food systems that provide direction for needed improvements.

**\*Special consideration will be given for proposals in FY16 related to valuation (such as, economic, ecosystem services, etc.), increasing understanding, and management for soil quality. This is the third year soil quality has been given special consideration. The CSANR Soil Quality Task Force has compiled [Soil Quality Investment Priorities](#) for effective and efficient investment in soil quality research.**

**\*Special consideration also will be given for proposals in FY16 focused on biologically intensive and organic agricultural strategies for addressing the Food-Energy-Water (FEW) Nexus of the National Science Foundation. (For more information about FEW, please see the [NSF overview](#))**

### **Previously Funded BIOAg Projects:**

The CSANR Grants Database <http://csanr.wsu.edu/csanr-grants/database/> is designed to showcase research funded through the Center by providing project reports, research outcomes, and publications resulting from funded research. The database can be navigated by year, researcher, project type, or topic. Users may also choose to browse all projects. *FY16 BIOAg applicants are encouraged to browse the database to get a sense of the breadth of projects funded.* Each project has a unique project ID number. In some cases CSANR has funded a single project for more than one year. In that case, project reports for each funded year are listed under the single project ID number.

### **For FY16 CSANR solicits grant proposals of three types:**

- BIOAg Project Grants (Research, Extension, or Integrated)
- Outreach/Extension Curriculum Mini-Grants
- Planning Grants

### **General Details:**

- The Lead PI must be a WSU faculty member (contact us if clarification is needed). Faculty members are encouraged to limit their submissions as Lead PI to a single proposal in each grant type (Project Grants, Mini-grants, Planning Grants).
- Proposals should prioritize needs relevant to the state of Washington.
- BIOAg funding may not be used to support development of, or promote stakeholder use of, transgenic crops.
- Application instructions are included in the proposal forms linked below for each grant type.
- Additional pages (beyond the template provided) are limited to a 1-page document to provide two supplementary graphics or tables ONLY.
- **NEW for 2016:** PIs and co-PIs must provide a 2-page biographical sketch by email with their final proposal submission (either USDA NIFA or NSF format).
- Proposals must be submitted through the electronic templates provided.
- Proposals are encouraged to integrate research, extension, and education wherever this will improve project value.
- Projects that are leveraged with other grant or gift support are encouraged.
- Upon award notification, a Grant Compliance Form will be required for awarded projects; form will be reviewed and approved prior to the transfer of funds.
- BIOAg funding may not be used for faculty salary augmentation (i.e. summer salary).
- Questions regarding the appropriateness of proposed topics should be directed to the CSANR Director, Chad Kruger, [cekruger@wsu.edu](mailto:cekruger@wsu.edu), 360-416-5222 (65222 from campus).
- Questions regarding the proposal template should be directed to Tara Zimmerman, [goldsmitht@wsu.edu](mailto:goldsmitht@wsu.edu), 206-770-6073 (46073 from campus).

### **Specific Details**

**1. BIOAg Project Grants** (*Research, Extension, or Integrated*) are due by December 16, 2015  
**Description:** Projects that develop, investigate, or demonstrate sustainability on farms or in food systems using BIOAg principles. These project grants are intended to seed exploration of new research ideas, overcome remaining technical/economic/social barriers to the use of existing BIOAg practices, and ensure that existing research is utilized. PIs must indicate Research, Extension or Integrated proposal – which will affect scoring criteria. In the case of “Integrated” proposals, PIs must describe how the proposal integrates research and extension. *Use of BIOAg Project grants to support graduate students is highly encouraged.* Final decisions regarding allocation of funding are dependent on the availability of funds.

**A Letter of Intent is requested by November 20, 2015** to help us prepare for proposal review. **Proposals are DUE December 16, 2015.** Funding decisions will be finalized by mid-February 2016. Funding is expected to be used between March 2016 and June 2017.

Potential may exist for renewal funding, depending on review and the availability of future funding. Excellent progress and efforts at leveraging funding will be expected.

Project Grant Awards: \$1,000 – \$40,000

Project Grant Scoring Criteria	Research	Extension	Integrated
Does this proposal fit the BIOAg RFP and address eligible topics?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Innovation or scientific contribution	35	15	25
Appropriate methods/procedures for proposed project	25	25	25
Impact potential	25	25	25
Interdisciplinary partnerships	10	15	10
Evaluation plan	N/A (0)	15	10
Document quality	5	5	5
Appropriate cost – assessed and negotiated after proposal review	-	-	-
Total	100	100	100

**Letter of Intent for BIOAg Project Proposals** - Due on November 20, 2015

The letter of intent will be used to identify appropriate reviewers and potential additional collaborators. Please follow the format in the application instructions and submit to [goldsmitht@wsu.edu](mailto:goldsmitht@wsu.edu) as a Word Document.

**Application Form and Instructions for BIOAg Letters of Intent and Project Proposals** -

Due December 16, 2015

**2. BIOAg Outreach/Extension Curriculum Mini-Grants:**

Description: Tours, workshops, curriculum, and other outreach that demonstrate or provide learning opportunities on sustainability and working BIOAg approaches on farms or in food systems. Proposals that develop “durable” products (e.g. webinars, videos, or documents) rather than single-opportunity events are encouraged.

*Special consideration in FY16 will be given to Outreach and Extension curriculum proposals that build upon or expand previously funded BIOAg research projects. Please visit the CSANR Grants Database (<http://csanr.wsu.edu/csanr-grants/database/> - browse by topic) for examples of previous research areas with substantive results.*

*BIOAg Outreach/Extension Curriculum mini-grants will be reviewed separately from the BIOAg Projects and will be considered on a rolling basis. Awards will be made based on successful review and available funding.*

Mini-grant Awards: up to \$10,000

**Application Form and Instructions for Outreach/Extension Curriculum Proposals** -

Rolling deadline until designated funds are expended.

### **3. Planning Grants:**

Description: Planning grants are designed to support appropriate direct costs associated with preparing a project proposal for extramural funding consideration. Planning grant proposals must designate the specific extramural program that the PIs intend to apply to and why the PIs expect to be competitive in that program. Planning Grants are intended to provide funding support for established teams with multiple PIs to prepare a large, national grant proposal for a collaborative project. *Please see the link below for additional description and instructions.*

Planning Grant Awards: \$5,000-\$8,000

#### **[Application Form and Instructions for Planning Grant Proposals](#)**

Rolling deadline until designated funds are expended.