



Center for
**Sustaining Agriculture
& Natural Resources**

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

The Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources (CSANR) exists to catalyze research, extension and educational activities that improve the sustainability of agriculture, natural resources and food systems in Washington State and around the world.

BIOAg (Biologically-Intensive Agriculture and Organic Farming) is an internal competitive grant program designed to catalyze WSU faculty engagement in biologically-intensive, organic and sustainable agriculture research and extension.

- *Biologically-intensive agriculture includes farming practices and systems that rely on biological and ecological processes which are renewable, non-polluting, and mutually beneficial to farmers and society.*
- *Organic agriculture is a legally defined set of agricultural management practices (see USDA National Organic Program).*
- *Sustainable agriculture is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.*

BIOAg Program: Request for Proposals

Goal:

The goal of the BIOAg solicitation is to engage WSU faculty to advance the development, understanding, and use of biologically-intensive, organic and sustainable agriculture in Washington State. BIOAg funding can be requested for three purposes: to stimulate new research initiatives, to augment existing research to address critical gaps, and to move existing, game-changing research out into the real world.

History and Context:

The BIOAg Program was established through a collaborative effort of WSU CSANR and concerned Washington stakeholders, with funding from the Washington State Legislature beginning in 2006. The program aims to help Washington farmers, ranchers and land managers develop, verify, and promote effective biologically-intensive, organic and sustainable agriculture strategies on all types of farms and all aspects of Washington's agriculture and food systems. The BIOAg program supports *both* incremental improvements and transformative ideas that redesign farm or food systems.

Applicants are encouraged to browse the [CSANR Grants Database](#) to get a sense of the breadth of projects funded. The database provides project reports, research outcomes, and publications resulting from research previously funded under BIOAg. The database can be navigated by year, researcher, project type, or topic.

Award rates in recent years have ranged from 20-25% of submitted proposals. Investigators are *highly encouraged* to call and discuss proposal concepts with CSANR Director Chad Kruger (360-416-5222, cekruger@wsu.edu) prior to submission to ensure program relevancy and to increase competitiveness in the program. Final decisions regarding allocation of funding are dependent on the availability of funds.

Overview of BIOAg Project Types and Guidelines for FY17:

The BIOAg Program will fund three project types:

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

Special consideration will be given for proposals in FY17 focused on biologically intensive and organic agricultural strategies for addressing the WSU [Sustaining Resources](#) grand challenge and/or the WSU [Sustaining Health](#) grand challenge.

The Principle Investigator must adequately describe how the proposed project is relevant to BIOAg and this solicitation.

Proposal Guidelines:

- Project grant proposals for seed funding of new ideas and planning grant proposals must precisely articulate the expected extramural grant program targeted by the Investigator, including articulation of why that grant program is identified.
- 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.

Submission Guidelines:

- Proposals must be submitted through the electronic templates provided. Proposals not submitted through the electronic templates will be disqualified and not reviewed.
- Application instructions are included in the proposal forms linked below for each grant type. Follow the instructions precisely or your proposal will be disqualified.
- Additional pages (beyond the template provided) are limited to a 1-page document to provide two supplementary graphics or tables ONLY. Use of this additional document to expand narrative will disqualify the proposal.
- The Lead PI must be a WSU faculty member (contact us if clarification is needed). Faculty members must limit their submissions as Lead PI to a single proposal and as co-PI to a single proposal, in each grant type (Project Grants, Mini-grants, & Planning Grants).

- PIs with no more than one currently funded BIOAg project are eligible to apply for a new project.
- PIs and co-PIs must provide a 2-page biographical sketch by email with their final proposal submission ([either USDA NIFA or NSF format](#)).
- BIOAg funding may not be used for faculty salary augmentation (i.e. summer salary).
- Projects that are leveraged with other grant or gift support are encouraged.
- Upon award notification, a Grant Compliance Form that serves as the project contract will be required for awarded projects; the form will be reviewed and approved prior to the transfer of funds.

Any questions regarding the appropriateness of proposed topics should be directed to the CSANR Director, Chad Kruger, cekruger@wsu.edu, 360-416-5222 (65222 from campus).

Questions regarding the proposal template should be directed to Tara Zimmerman, goldsmitht@wsu.edu, 206-770-6073 (46073 from campus).

Details on Proposal Types and Timelines:

1. BIOAg Project Grants (*Research, Extension, or Integrated*) are due by December 14, 2016

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. “Integrated” proposals are encouraged, but in this case, PIs must describe how the proposal integrates research and extension, and how the integration adds value. Use of BIOAg Project grants to support graduate students is highly encouraged.

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 18, 2016

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 as a Word Document.

Application Form and Instructions for BIOAg Letters of Intent and Project Proposals - Due December 14, 2016 Funding decisions will be finalized by mid-February 2017.

Funding is expected to be used between March 2017 and December 2018. One 6-month no-cost extension may be granted depending on progress and review. Excellent progress and efforts at leveraging funding will be expected.

2. BIOAg Extension Mini-Grants:

Description: Peer-reviewed Extension publications, curricula, decision support tools, webinars, and videos that extend information from available research on BIOAg related topics and themes.

BIOAg Extension mini-grants are reviewed twice each year. Awards will be made based on successful review and available funding.

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

Application Form and Instructions for Extension mini-grant Proposals - Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis but are reviewed Oct 15, and March 15.

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.

Planning Grants should be used to get significant work accomplished over a multi-day meeting including: defining team goals (both on the grant writing team and on the project team after the large grant is funded); meeting face to face with the whole team and possibly someone from office of major grants development (for budget and logic model help); and completing drafts of primary proposal documents *required by the funder* such as outline, timeline, communication plan, organizational chart, logic model, reference list, project objectives, or other supporting documents relevant to the targeted RFA. Draft documents are required reporting documentation for Planning Grants.

Successful Planning Grant funding proposals will include: 1) all team members (PIs and co-PIs, and their specific roles in the project); 2) clear details about the preparation process

proposed (where, when and who will participate, what will be accomplished, etc.); 3) specifically identified national funding program to which the proposal will be submitted, the RFA timeline, and why you expect to be competitive for this funding source; and 4) main objectives of the national proposal in preparation.

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

[Application Form and Instructions for Planning Grant Proposals](#) –
Rolling deadline until designated funds are expended.

Proposal Review and Funding Decisions:

Each BIOAg project proposal receives ad hoc review from two CSANR Advisory Committee members who evaluate topic relevance and predicted impact. Each proposal is also thoroughly reviewed and scored by at least one ad hoc scientist with relevant expertise in the subject area. These written reviews are compiled and shared with the selection panel, comprised of a rotating subset of the CSANR Leadership Team members. The selection panel members, who also independently score proposals, meet to review all submitted proposals, comments and scores. Using all information available, the panel makes a funding recommendation. Typically, funds are available for only 20-25% of proposals received. PIs are notified of the status of their proposal in early February.

In contrast, Extension mini-grant and planning grant proposals are reviewed by a small group of CSANR Leadership Team members and faculty with relevant expertise to the proposal. Extension mini-grants are reviewed twice each year and planning grant proposals are reviewed on a rolling basis as they are received.