

Water Resources Research Institute Program 104(b) Research Grant Proposal Guidelines

The University of Arizona's Water Resources Research Center invites proposals for research projects that address water-related issues of importance to Arizona and the Southwest. Grant funds are provided by the Water Resources Research Act, Section 104(b) program through the U.S. Geological Survey. The program provides support for research projects that explore new ideas to address water problems in Arizona and expand understanding of water and related phenomena. The entry of new research scientists, engineers, and technicians in water resources fields and the education of students through significant involvement in water research are primary program goals.

Research proposals will be considered from the physical, biological, social, and engineering sciences, including water management, water law, economics, and public health. Proposals must fall under one of the following Science Priorities:

- **Water Scarcity and Availability**
- **Water Hazards**
- **Water Quality**
- **Water Policy, Planning, and Socioeconomics**
- **Watershed Function**
- **Water Technology and Innovation**
- **Workforce Development and Water Literacy**

This year, the WRRC expects to award two (2) to four (4) grants of up to \$10,000 in federal funds to support research projects. Projects requesting less than \$10,000 in federal funding are encouraged.

Proposals must show faculty or research personnel at one of the three Arizona state universities as the Principal Investigator (PI) **and** include support for student involvement.

Funded projects will start September 1, 2026, contingent on federal budget approval. The project duration is 12 months. **Note:** It can take six weeks (or more) for the University of Arizona Office of Sponsored Projects to administer the award once received. Keep this in mind for when the funds can be spent down.

The deadline for proposals is 5:00 pm MST, Monday, March 16, 2026.

Funding Information:

Proposal budgets should request no more than about \$10,000 in federal funding, and proposals for less than \$10,000 in federal funding are encouraged. Federal funds should not be requested for the support of faculty or research staff, and subcontracts are discouraged.

A 1:1 match of non-federal to federal dollars is required. Federal dollars may not be used for matching funds. Indirect costs are not allowed in the federal cost category (Public law 101-397, Water Research Institutes Authorization). Note that waived indirect costs may be used to fulfill the matching requirement, i.e., you may show the indirect costs computed for both federal and

non-federal funds as part of the match. Use Attachment B - Budget Template (Excel) and Attachment C - Budget Justification (fillable PDF)

Matching funds should include PI time to perform administrative/supervisory functions.

A cost sharing commitment letter, signed by your departmental chairman, dean, or authorized university representative, committing the unit to the cost share shown in your budget, must be sent to the WRRC no later than the proposal deadline.

Project funding is contingent on Congressional appropriation of Water Resources Research Institute Program funds.

Proposal Instructions:

An acceptable proposal must have the following elements.

Items numbered 1 through 11 are to be provided as a coversheet to the full project narrative.

1. **Title.** Concise but descriptive (Max. 10 words)
2. **Project Type.** State “Research.”
3. **Research Category/Science Priority.** Choose from the following the *one* category that most closely applies: Water Scarcity and Availability, Water Hazards, Water Quality, Water Policy, Planning, and Socioeconomics, Watershed Function, Water Technology and Innovation, or Workforce Development and Water Literacy.
4. **Keywords – Focus Categories.** Choose a maximum of three focus categories from the provided list (**Attachment A**), with the most preferred focus category first.
5. **USGS Cross-Discipline Landscape Descriptor and USGS Cross-Discipline Science Descriptors.**
 - a. **Landscape Descriptor** will most likely be “None of the Above”. It is not a problem to select “None of the Above” for Arizona-related projects. Select *one* of the following: Arctic, California Bay Delta, Chesapeake Bay, Columbia River, Everglades, Great Lakes, Gulf Coast, Klamath, Puget Sound, Salton Sea, Upper Mississippi River, or None of the Above.
 - b. **Science Descriptor.** Select *one* of the following: Energy, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), Indian Water Rights, Natural Hazards, Oceans/Coastal/Great Lakes, STEM, Water Challenges, or Other
6. **Start Date. September 1, 2026**
7. **End Date. August 31, 2027**
8. **Principal investigator.** Provide name, academic rank, university, email address, and phone number of the PI. Provide the same information for all PIs and Co-PIs.
9. **Congressional District** of the university where the work is to be conducted.
10. **Abstract.** Provide a brief (350-word max.) description of the problem, methods, and objectives.
11. **Plain Language Summary.** Please *also* provide a 150-word summary of the proposed project, written for the public (avoiding technical jargon, acronyms, or terms of art).
12. **Budget Breakdown,** use the EXCEL form provided (Attachment B).
13. **Budget Justification,** use the PDF form provided (Attachment C).
 - ****Please have the budget reviewed by your departmental accountant before you submit it****

Items 14 through 20 shall not exceed 3 single-spaced pages, 12-point font, one-inch margins.

Citations/References and Investigator qualifications do not count against the 3-page limit.

14. **Title.** Use the same title as in item 1, above. (Max. 10 words)
15. **Statement of regional or state water problem.** Include an explanation of the need for the project, who wants it, and why. (Max. 250 words)
16. **Statement of results or benefits.** Specify the type of information that is to be gained and how it will be used. Specify deliverables, such as publications. (Max. 250 words)
17. **Nature, scope, and objectives of the project, including a timeline of activities.** Proposals should be for projects of 12 months in duration. (Max. 350 words)

18. **Methods, procedures, and facilities.** Provide enough information to permit evaluation of the technical adequacy of the approach to satisfy the objectives. (Max. 350 words)
19. **Related research.** Show by literature and communication citations the similarities and dissimilarities of the proposed project to completed or on-going work on the same topic. (Max. 350 words)
20. **Training potential.** List graduate and undergraduate students, by degree level, who are expected to receive training in the project. (Max 50 words)
21. **Investigator's qualifications.** Include resumé(s) of the principal investigator(s) and the resume of the co-principal investigator student. Does not count against the 3-page limit. No resumé shall exceed two pages or list more than 15 pertinent publications.

Required Additional Documentation:

- For all proposals:
 - **Cost Sharing Commitment Letter:** To be signed by your departmental chairman, dean, or authorized university representative, committing the unit to the cost share shown in your budget
 - **Data Management Plan:** This supplementary document should *briefly (One page)* describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (e.g. “No data are expected to be produced from this project”), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. Please keep this DMP to one page. This supplementary document may include:
 - the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
 - the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
 - policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
 - provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
 - plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.
- For ASU or NAU - Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement for your institution.

Selection Criteria:

WRRRA Section 104(b) research should explore new ideas to address water problems in Arizona and expand understanding of water and related phenomena, focusing on issues of Water Scarcity and Availability, Water Hazards, Water Quality, Water Policy, Planning, and Socioeconomics, Watershed Function, Water Technology and Innovation, or Workforce Development and Water Literacy.

1. Responsiveness. Does the proposed project promise to foster improvements in water supply reliability, explore new ideas that address water problems, or expand understanding of water and related phenomena? Does the proposal directly address research topics of significance to Arizona?

2. Technical Merit. Are the objectives, methods, and techniques adequately described? Is the proposal scientifically and technically sound as described? Is the proposal well-written, organized, and complete? Do the investigators demonstrate cognizance of past work?

3. Feasibility. Is the project likely to be successful given the methods, budget, and timeline proposed? Are the qualifications of the investigators appropriate for the proposed research?

4. Student Training. Does the proposal support the training and education of students?

Deliverables

The award recipient will be required to submit a final report by **October 1, 2027**.

Award recipients may be asked to provide written updates to Jamie McEvoy by email (jmcevoy@arizona.edu) at regular intervals to track research progress. Updates should align with PI invoices and financial reports to their department.

Recipients are required to submit a poster to the WRRRC Annual Conference and/or present their research in a WRRRC Water Webinar.

Award recipients are expected to provide appropriate information needed to produce a short update about completed research to be posted on the WRRRC website and linked from the WRRRC's Weekly Wave e-news digest.

Proposal Submission Procedure:

1. Email the complete proposal package to Jamie McEvoy at the address below no later than **5:00 pm MST, Monday, March 16, 2026**.
2. Please submit the following components, in this order, as a single combined PDF:
 - a. Coverpage (items #1-11)
 - b. Title & Narrative (items #14-20; 3 page limit)
 - c. Citations
 - d. Budget Justification
 - e. Data Management Plan
 - f. Cost Sharing Commitment Letter
 - g. Investigator Qualifications/Resumé(s) (item #21)
3. The Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement (for ASU and NAU) and Budget Breakdown Excel spreadsheet may be sent as separate files.
4. You will receive an email confirming receipt of your proposal. If you do not receive a confirming email within 48 hours, contact Jamie McEvoy.
5. The PIs on selected proposals will be sent additional instructions as appropriate if proposal modifications or other actions are required.

For information, contact:

Jamie McEvoy, Associate Director
 Water Resources Research Center
 Email: jmcevoy@arizona.edu