



Northeastern States Research Cooperative

Instructions for submission of full proposals

Full proposals are due by 4:30 pm on January 22, 2021

Late proposals and those that do not meet format requirements will not be accepted.

Note: The pre-proposal application period is now closed. You must have submitted a pre-proposal to submit a full proposal.

Proposal Submission Process: When your proposal is ready for submission, please access the Google Form (<https://forms.gle/WFzWpV5QPZE36Fns9>), where you will be asked to enter basic proposal metadata. (If the link does not work, please copy and paste into your browser.)

After submitting the form, please send a pdf of the full proposal via email to this email address: 2020_NS.1k4m6ulvr21115ac@u.box.com. Files should be labeled as **Last Name_First Name_Short Title_NSRC 2020_FP**. Simply attach the PDF file to a blank email and send. Please email the proposal PDF only once. If you do not get a confirmation email from Box, please contact one of the program managers (see contact information below).

Please include the following in your proposal.

All elements of the proposal should be in 10 point (or greater) font.

Title Page(s)

Heading: "2020 NSRC Full Proposal"

Project Title

Principal Investigator (include name, affiliation, address, telephone number(s) and email)

Co-Principal Investigator(s), cooperators and other partners (include name, affiliation, address, telephone number(s) and email).

Total amount of NSRC funds requested and the amounts requested per year

Total amount of matching funds offered and the amounts offered per year

Total project costs (total amount of NSRC funds requested and matching funds offered)

Abstract (One-half of a page)

Summarize the proposed project in a brief abstract not to exceed one-half of a page. The abstract should briefly explain the overall study including its justification, specific objectives, basic appropriate methodology, expected results and outputs and/or outcomes as well as short- and long-term benefits for the Northern Forest and its stakeholders and communities. If the proposal is funded, this summary will most importantly become the basis for public documents describing NSRC-supported research projects. The Abstract should be written for a wide-ranging audience of Northern Forest interests and the general public with limited knowledge and use of field-related terminology.

Proposal Narrative (Six pages maximum)

The proposal narrative should include the following elements.

- **Introduction:** A summary of the issue(s), why the project needs to be done, and the benefits derived. How will this project address the specific focus areas and priority issues in the Northeastern States Research Cooperative RFP?
- **Project Goals and Supporting Objectives:** Include a clear statement of the project goals and specific objective(s). State the hypothesis or research question to be explored.
- **Project Justification and Relevance:** This section is intended to describe how the proposed project is relevant and beneficial to the Northern Forest region, including the people who live within its boundaries, work with its resources, use its products, visit it, and care about it. Provide a concise review and synthesis of existing knowledge to justify your goals and objectives. If your proposal builds on research previously funded by NSRC, please take special care to explain this connection. Also include the rationale behind the current need for the proposed research and its timeliness. Be sure to describe the project's potential for *application* to Northern Forest lands and communities and how will it address the needs and interests of stakeholder groups in the Northern Forest region (Who will directly benefit from the results of the proposed research and why do the beneficiaries or stakeholders that you have defined need this research?). This section is intended to provide peer reviewers with evidence that the proposed work addresses concerns in the Northern Forest four-state region as stipulated in the RFP. Although the literature may be extensive, the synthesis should be restricted to the most important and/or most relevant sources.
- **Approach and Methodology:** Include a clear description of the proposed research methods without going into detailed statistical or technical descriptions and formulas. This section should include concise details of methodology as well as justification that would allow a diverse group of reviewers to assess (1) the merits of the proposed methods in providing long-term, credible, scientifically rigorous results; (2) the degree to which environmental and social, community, economic, or workforce development concerns are integrated; (3) the qualifications of the researchers to successfully complete the proposed study; and (4) the roles and responsibility of *all* collaborators and cooperators listed on the project.
- **Expected Products, Outputs, and Possible Outcomes:** Include an explicit description of expected products, outputs, and possible outcomes as well as the benefits of the research project for lands and communities of the Northern Forest region. Remember that “outcomes” are different from “products and outputs.” Outputs are specific deliverables such as a report, workshop, or dataset that should be deliverable by the conclusion of the project. Outcomes are changed behaviors, attitudes, understanding or conditions within the community that may take some time to mature. Consider who wants this information and why. Fully describe (1) communication plans for how research results and products will serve and be disseminated to stakeholder groups and communities in the region, and (2) how you expect the beneficiaries or stakeholders to use the results of your research. *Note:* Funded proposals will be required to submit annual progress reports and a final report that follows the NSRC-specified format. These required outputs do not need to be described in the proposal.
- **Results from Prior NSRC Support:** If the lead PI has received NSRC support of any kind in the past (either as lead PI or Co-PI), list the project(s) and identify all specific products (papers, brochures, datasets, etc.). Describe how your previous research has made a difference to the Northern Forest communities and include outcomes and outputs. You do not need to identify required NSRC reports, e.g., final reports. Also explain whether and how the proposed research builds on your previous NSRC research.

References and Citations (Two pages maximum)

Citation page formatting may include smaller font sizes and/or spacing.

Project Timeline

Include a **project timeline** (one page maximum) to show your plans for managing the project over the course of the proposed project period.

Budget and Budget Narrative

Use the **budget and budget narrative template** found on the [NSRC RFP webpage](#). If applicable, please note whether requested funding is a part of a larger effort where NSRC funds may leverage or complement other funds. Details regarding match/cost share should mirror the categories and level of specificity found in the Federal budget request. The **budget narrative** template is located in the same Excel workbook as the budget. The budget narrative should describe the requested funding and matching funding (if provided) in sufficient detail to allow an independent peer review panel to assess the likelihood of meeting project objectives with the proposed funding level. The budget narrative is critical for reviewers to understand budget allocation choices that might not be clearly explained in the project narrative or budget table. It is required that the budget narrative address *each* component of the budget. Persons or entities that would receive NSRC funds must be explained and justified in sufficient detail to judge whether the requested funds are warranted.

Please note the following budget guidance:

- **Equipment:** Federal NSRC funds may *not* be used to purchase equipment (defined as \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of over one year). Equipment purchased with non-federal dollars may be used as matching funding, as long as Uniform Guidance rules are followed. See CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-306.
- **Subawards:** A subaward budget in the same format as the proposal budget is required for any subawards in the application. To be clear, the main proposal should have the annual budgets of subaward(s) listed. An additional budget and budget narrative form is required to provide detail about each subaward.
- **Indirect Costs:** Applicants to the NSRC RFP may use their institution's federally negotiated indirect cost rate (NICRA), also called overhead or facilities and administration (F&A) rate. Applicants may elect to charge an indirect cost rate that is lower than their maximum rate for a federal sponsor. In this case, the indirect costs foregone may be used as matching funding for the proposed project. If an institution or organization does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, a *de minimus* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs can be used.
- **Matching Requirements for Research Projects:** As specified in statute, preference will be given to research proposals that offer matching (cost share funds) in an amount not less than 50% of the federal funds requested (i.e., \$0.5 non-federal cost share for each \$1 federal awarded). A portion of these matching funds may derive from indirect costs foregone (as noted above), direct expenditures of non-federal funding sources, or in-kind contributions, as described in uniform guidance for federally funded projects. Match may be in the form of indirect costs charged on an institution's matching direct costs per the institution's negotiated F&A rate agreement and if allowed by the institution's indirect cost policy. Matching sources must be described in detail in the budget narrative. Additional documentation of these sources may be required. This criterion is reflected in the final proposal evaluation metrics.

Resume or CV

Include resumes or curriculum vitae (CV) (two pages maximum per person, one page per person is acceptable) of the lead investigator, co-principal investigator(s), and any other cooperators or consultants specifically identified in the proposal to receive funds for the project. CVs should reflect recent, relevant experience and publication(s) demonstrating the expertise of the researcher(s) for successful completion of the project.

Signed Endorsement from Proposed Funding Recipients

A signed letter from an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) denoting that the enclosed application is accurate and approved for submission based on relevant institutional rules is required. A signed letter from an AOR of any institution or organization that would receive proposed NSRC funding or provide matching funds is also required. An AOR is typically someone from the institution's office of sponsored programs or research or from the organization's business office. This endorsement from the AOR can be provided in many different formats. No matter the form, the endorsement should indicate approval of submitted budget and amount as well as transmittal information for the institution, in preparation for the possibility that the proposal may be funded.

Letters of Commitment

The expertise, involvement, and responsibility of collaborators, cooperators, and/or specifically identified groups acknowledged to participate in the project must be explained if they are not included in the budget, and a

letter of commitment must be included from each individual and/or group identified as Collaborator or Cooperator. A letter of commitment indicates a willingness to work with the PI(s) on a project and states what the collaborator or cooperator will do for the proposed research. A sample letter of commitment could contain the following statement: “If the proposal submitted by [insert PI name] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding by the NSRC, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Scope of Work and/or Budget Justification.”

Additional Supporting Documentation

Letters of support are allowed, but letters of recommendation or support are *not* considered letters of commitment or letters of endorsement. Additional appendices of figures/tables are *not* allowed.

Review Process

For the full review process please refer to page 4 of the [RFP located on the NSRC website](#).

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE NSRC PROGRAM MANAGERS

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