Global Food Systems Seed Grant Program 2024

Proposal call

The GFS Seed Grant Program invites applications for innovative research in all aspects of global food systems including, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Increasing food production — crops or livestock, such as improving crop yield, pest management or animal health.
- Better management of water and other resources/systems related to food production and distribution, or better management of the food produced.
- Keeping food systems safe — improving food safety, bio/agro security.
- Increasing food nutritional value.
- Policy, social concerns and economic factors driving food systems.
- Combating obesity and nutritional illiteracy.

Two critical requirements for all projects are:

1. The potential to impact job growth and job creation, as well as retain and attract talent in the state of Kansas.
2. Specific plans to attract new externally sponsored funding to solve GFS grand challenges.

Project funding

Awards will be made for a two-year period for funding levels up to $100,000 per year, or $200,000 total award. Second year funding will be contingent upon continued state funding and project progress in the first year, and there can be no carryover of first year funds into the second year.

Timeline

- RFP announced: February 7, 2024
- Required Industry Perspectives Workshop: 1-2 p.m., Tuesday, March 5 or 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, March 6.
- Proposals due: April 5, 2024
- Awards announced: May 2024

- Project start: July 1, 2024

Eligibility

K-State faculty members — either tenured, tenure-track, research-track, or teaching faculty who have some research appointment — are eligible to apply for seed grant funding under this opportunity. Subcontracting with other universities or groups is not allowed; external consultants may be allowed but must have been approved by the Office of Research Development in advance of submission.

A faculty member cannot be included in more than two submissions. Multiple submissions allow for a faculty member to be a PI/co-PI on only one submission and a collaborator/senior investigator on one other submission. Additionally, there is a limit of a total of three PI's/co-PI's per proposal.

Mandatory pre-proposal Industry-Perspectives Training

Because of the importance of industry growth to the state of Kansas, we require at least one PI on a proposal to attend a one-hour training session on finding industry partners. Choose from sessions: 1-2 p.m., Tuesday, March 5 or 2-3 p.m., March 6. Graduate students cannot attend in place of a PI.

More information on registering for these sessions will be posted to this website soon.

Guidelines and priorities

Guidelines and priorities for developing successful proposals:

- Collaboration with industry is encouraged, particularly with Kansas-based companies or companies for which there is opportunity for job/investment creation within the state. See information on mandatory Industry Perspectives training.
- Proposals **must** include impacts on job creation or economic development for Kansas.
- Preference will be given to interdisciplinary projects that engage multiple disciplines and colleges. Interdisciplinary areas of research should include

appropriate combinations of scientific, business, humanities, arts and technical approaches.

- Graduate or undergraduate student participation should be integrated into projects to help develop the future food systems workforce.
- Funds may support activities such as pilot projects, workshops, planning activities, program development, equipment purchase and collaboration with external consultants where appropriate to achieve the stated objectives. See more details regarding equipment purchases in the proposal format and requirements section below.
- Inclusion of an external consultant or other potentially questionable items must be pre-approved by the Office of Research Development before submitting a proposal.
- Funds may not be used to sustain ongoing projects or support work conducted outside of the U.S.
- Awards are renewable for one year contingent on availability of funds and review of first year's results. There will be no cost extensions of the yearly period of performance.

Proposal Format and Requirements

Proposals must use 11-pt Times New Roman or Calibri font with 1" page margins, and include the following sections (maximum page limits for each section in parenthesis):

- Cover sheet (1): Include project title, the names/departments/colleges of the PI and co-PIs (limited to a total of three PIs/co-PIs), abstract and total requested funding. Abstract should summarize the project proposed, relate the project's relevance to the GFS initiative and list envisioned outcomes if funded.
- Project description (7): Include project statement with goals, objectives and anticipated outcomes; a background/ justification section; description of the research/project that will be conducted, including discussion of how the project addresses as many as possible of the evaluation criteria, guidelines,

priorities, and reporting requirements; and a section on likely economic impacts.

- o Additional information:
- ▪ The role of students in the project should be clearly articulated.
- ▪ All images, figures, and tables needed in the project description should fit within the 7-page project description. Appendices are not allowed.
- ▪ Proposals that are primarily equipment requests must address why the equipment is needed, where it will be housed, what GFS-related research and training the equipment will enable — demonstrate that it will primarily support GFS-related research — and, if comparable equipment is available on campus, why the requested equipment is also needed.
- Equipment plan (2): This is only for proposals that include major equipment requests. Include a list of likely users of the equipment and the type of GFS research each will conduct as well as a plan for handling the operation and management costs of the equipment after its purchase.
- Timeline (2): Include a timeline detailing major milestones and deliverables.
- Participant list (1): A participant list including names, departments, colleges and project roles.
- Biosketch (3 pages for each PI or Co-PI): Use NSF format.
- Budget and budget justification (3): Use the Global Food Systems [Budget Template](XLSX). Do not include Indirect Costs. Matching funds from industrial/private collaborators are encouraged and should be addressed in the budget justification.
- References cited (no limit).

Submission

The above components should be combined and submitted as a single PDF file. If these are not combined, they will be returned without review. These are not to be entered into Cayuse SP by the submitting unit. Proposals are due by 5 p.m. CDT on Friday, April 5, 2024 and should be submitted electronically, with subject, "GFS Proposal" to:

Gina Becker, GFS Coordinator
Office of Research Development
gfsseedgrant@k-state.edu

Review

Proposals will be reviewed in the weeks following the submission deadline. Feedback will be provided on proposals that are not funded.

Evaluation criteria

- Clear and believable economic impacts — especially those in Kansas. This section is weighted the highest of all review criteria.
- Involvement of industry in the project, particularly Kansas-based companies, or companies for which there is an opportunity for job creation/new investment within the state.
- Attraction of business or creation of jobs in Kansas.
- Strength of the idea proposed and the clarity of its presentation.
- Well-articulated goals and objectives.
- Well laid out and understandable approach section.
- Explanation of the significance and benefits of the project.
- Relevance of the project to the GFS and EPP initiatives.
- Capability of the project team to complete what is proposed.
- Demonstrated involvement of participants from multiple disciplines and colleges.
- Specific plans to attract new externally sponsored funding to solve GFS grand challenges.
- Identification of additional sources of funding — cash or in-kind — to support the proposed activity and/or its broader strategy.
- Training of students — provide estimate of number of students trained per year — to support the global food systems industry.
- Attraction of national attention to GFS issues through a regional or national presentation, publication, or equivalent.

Award timing and project reporting

Award announcements will be made in May 2024, and projects will start on July 1, though the fund transfer will not occur until approximately July 15. All year one

funds must be spent and processed by June 1, 2025. There can be no carryover of year one funds into year two, and second year funding will be contingent upon available funding and sufficient progress made by the project team.

A progress report at six months and at 12 months will be required so that preliminary outcomes can be reported to the state.

The final required deliverables are as follows:

- A short report to the Office of Research Development.
- Participation in a poster session at the end of a funding year.
- Submission of a competitive extramural proposal or pre-proposal to an external funding agency within a year of completion of the project.