

Request for Applications

A stylized sun logo with a circular base and three rays extending upwards and outwards, rendered in a light yellow/gold color with a soft glow.

**Sun Grant Program
Western Region**

2016

**Competitive Grants Program
(U.S. Department of Agriculture)**

Deadlines:

Letter of Intent (required):

Monday February 1, 2016 (5 pm Pacific)

Full Application:

Monday, March 30, 2016 (5 pm Pacific)

Sun Grant Program – Western Region
2016 Request for Applications - - Executive Summary
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA funds)

The Sun Grant Program – Western Region (SGW) announces the availability of competitive funds and seeks proposals from qualified institutions and investigators that address the following regional strategic program areas:

- 1) Decentralized and distributed feedstocks and energy systems; efforts will support deployment of commercial scale biomass electrical generation and co-generation efforts and production of biofuels and bioproducts from multiple feedstocks that exploit the economic benefits of complementary aggregation;
- 2) Novel feedstocks for bioenergy, bioproducts, and biofuels from agricultural or forestry residues; and
- 3) Life cycle analysis and sustainability

The SGW has identified the above named regional priorities from within USDA strategic areas, based upon prior regional priority setting workshops and consultation with regional experts. SGW seeks proposals with an emphasis on these strategic regional program areas.

In addition to requesting Sun Grant funds, all proposals must include an additional 25% (auditable) in project cost-share (20% of total project cost is required). Indirect is limited by USDA to 25% of direct costs (or 20% total project cost). Integration, economics, marketing, policy, education or a combination of these overarching activities may be incorporated in any proposal. Two types of applications are being sought:

Collaborative Proposals: Multi-institutional and multi-functional (research, education and outreach) proposals are sought that address Sun Grant goals and regional priorities. Collaborative proposals may request up to \$150,000 in federal funds per year for up to two years but is subject to appropriation of funds. No more than 50% of available funds will be awarded in Year 1.

Single Institution Proposals: Individual investigators, or small teams from a single institution, that address the Sun Grant mission and regional priorities may submit proposals requesting up to \$75,000 per year for one to two years but is subject to appropriation of funds. No more than 50% of available funds will be awarded in Year 1.

The mission of the Sun Grant Program is to focus the abilities of the nation's land grant institutions in partnership with the private sector and federal laboratories to enhance national energy security and independence through the development, distribution and implementation of bio-based energy technologies, to promote bio-based diversification and environmental sustainability of the region's agriculture, and to promote opportunities for bio-based economic diversification in rural communities.

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required but will not be peer reviewed. Submission of a LOI by the deadline automatically allows the Principal Investigator to submit a full proposal. LOIs must be submitted by February 1, 2016. Full applications are due by March 30, 2016. All application materials must be submitted through an online proposal system, which can be found at <https://webnibus.org/sungrant/western>

The remainder of this document contains details on submission guidelines, timetables, and other application information. For more information or to view previously selected projects please go to: <http://sungrant.oregonstate.edu>.

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1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

THE SUN GRANT PROGRAM

As readily accessible domestic sources of petroleum have waned, the United States has steadily increased its reliance on oil imported from other nations. The proportion of imported oil increased from about 30% of domestic consumption in 1970 to about 56% in 2000 (Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group, 2001). This trend has raised concerns about the nation's energy security. Much of our imported oil originates from nations unfriendly to the U.S. with unstable or repressive governments.

Authorized by Congress in 2004, the Sun Grant Program is a national network of land-grant universities partnering to build a biobased economy. Sun Grant institutions are charged with making significant advances in biobased industries for the benefit of America's independent farmers, rural communities, and public at large.

The Sun Grant Program was conceived to partner the national network of land-grant universities and federal laboratories to aid in building a biobased economy that would reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels and enhance economic diversification in rural areas of the United States. Potential products include: biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, electrical power, lubricants, plastics, solvents, adhesives, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and building materials. The Program will broaden the role that land grant universities play by also focusing the efforts of these universities on renewable energy and biobased industries. Developing biobased businesses, based on availability of feedstocks, will also enhance development of rural communities.

The mission of the Sun Grant Program is to (1) enhance national energy security through development, distribution and implementation of biobased energy technologies, (2) promote diversification in and the environmental sustainability of, agricultural production in the United States through biobased energy and products technologies; (3) promote economic diversification in rural areas of the United States through biobased energy and product technologies; and (4) enhance the efficiency of bioenergy and biomass research and development programs through improved coordination and collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Energy, other US Departments, and the land-grant colleges and universities.

The Sun Grant Program is organized as a network of five land-grant universities serving as regional Sun Grant Centers: South Dakota State University (North-Central), Oregon State University (Western), Oklahoma State University (South-Central), the University of Tennessee – Knoxville (Southeastern), and Penn State University (Northeastern).

These centers will facilitate federally funded research, extension, and education programs in their respective regions. These programs will embrace the multi-institution, multi-state, multi-

disciplinary integrated approach that is at the heart of the land-grant method of addressing problems.

In summary, the Sun Grant mission is reflected in the following four goals:

- a. To enhance national energy security through the development, distribution, and implementation of biobased energy technologies;
- b. To promote diversification in, and the environmental sustainability of, agricultural production in the United States through biobased energy and product technologies;
- c. To promote economic diversification in rural areas of the United States through biobased energy and product technologies; and
- d. To enhance the efficiency of bioenergy and biomass research and development programs through improved coordination and collaboration among
 - i. federal and state agencies and laboratories
 - ii. land-grant colleges and universities, and
 - iii. the private sector

SUN GRANT PROGRAM - WESTERN REGION

The Sun Grant Program Western Region Center (SGW), located at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon, carries out administrative functions for the region composed of the States of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington; and the territories of Guam and American Samoa; as well as the U.S. affiliated Pacific islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The Pacific Subcenter is housed at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. The SGW and the Subcenter are cooperatively conducting the 2016 solicitation and review process.

SCOPE OF THE SOLICITATION

The SGW has received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Institute of Food and Agriculture for competitively-selected projects that will further the Sun Grant and USDA missions. Projects will be expected to develop viable, alternative, biobased fuel and energy sources and products, while enhancing economic opportunities in rural areas. Western regional research priorities for the 2016 grant cycle address priority program areas identified by USDA, including: biomass and bioenergy production and technologies.

To make biobased economic diversification a reality, the region also needs education and outreach about the benefits and impacts of biobased industries and renewable energy as well as better economic and marketing data analysis. The SGW thus encourages proposals to provide education and outreach activities and, to the extent possible, include an economic analysis. Integration of a combination of these overarching activities are encouraged in all proposals.

Competitive funds will be released through an application process (described below). Funding of proposals is subject to availability/receipt of federal funds. Additionally, continuation of funding beyond 2016 (i.e., for 2017-2020) depends upon receipt of funds by SGW from the funding agency. Two types of applications are being sought:

Collaborative Proposals: Multi-institutional and multi-functional (research, education and outreach) proposals are sought that address Sun Grant goals and regional priorities. Collaborative proposals may request up to \$150,000 in federal funds per year for up to two years.

Single Institution Proposals: Individual investigators, or small teams from a single institution, that address the Sun Grant mission and regional priorities may submit proposals requesting up to \$75,000 per year for one to two years.

INDIRECT COST LIMITATION

Indirect costs are limited by USDA to the lesser of the applicant's official negotiated indirect cost rate or 30% of Total Federal Funds provided (TFF). Thus, if the project is requesting \$150,000 TFF, the indirect request is limited to \$45,000 and direct costs would be \$105,000. SGW asks that the calculation using 30% TFF be used for consistency among proposals.

REQUIRED COST SHARE

USDA requires successful applicants to provide a minimum of 20% cost share. For example, if the total project cost is \$125,000, then the SGW will provide \$100,000 and \$25,000 must be provided as cost share. Grantees may provide funds through in-kind contributions including faculty salaries, facilities, and waived indirect, or from state, local, non-profit or private funds. No federal funds may be used as cost share.

The matching requirement does not apply to *fundamental research*. Fundamental research means research that increases knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and has the potential for broad application. It should also have an effect on agriculture, food, nutrition, or the environment. Up to 100% match is strongly recommended for demonstration or pilot projects. The amount of non-federal funding will be considered in the review process.

PROGRAM PREFERENCES

Applications must meet the minimum requirements of eligibility and provide 20% of total project costs in non-federal cost-share to be considered. Applications with multi-state partnerships and a cost-share commitment greater than the required 20% are highly encouraged. The application ranking process will allocate points based on these factors. Scientific merit and regional relevance, however, will have a greater influence on ranking.

Proposals are expected to include a Project Logic Model (a generic logic model is available on the Sun Grant website). This description of the project illustrates the sequence of actions that describe what the project is and will do – how investments link to results. There are 6 core components in this depiction of the project:

1. **INPUTS:** resources, contributions, investments that go into the program
2. **ACTIVITIES:** things that are done
3. **OUTPUTS:** activities, services, events and products that reach people who participate or who are targeted
4. **OUTCOMES:** results or changes (in knowledge, application, behavior)for individuals, groups, communities, organizations, communities, or systems
5. **Assumptions:** the beliefs we have about the program, the people involved, and the context and the way we think the program will work
6. **External Factors:** the environment in which the program exists includes a variety of external factors that interact with and influence the program action.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Proposals should clearly state how the project objectives address the following priority program areas:

- 1) Decentralized and distributed energy systems
- 2) Novel feedstocks for bioenergy, bioproducts, and biofuels from agricultural or forestry residues
- 3) Life cycle analysis and the sustainable production systems

In addition to the stated programmatic priorities, greater weight will be given to projects which also demonstrate effort to:

- a. enhance national energy security through the development, distribution, and implementation of biobased energy technologies;
- b. promote diversification in, and the environmental sustainability of, agricultural production in the United States through biobased energy and product technologies;
- c. promote economic diversification in rural areas of the United States through biobased energy and product technologies; and

- d. enhance the efficiency of bioenergy and biomass research and development programs
through improved coordination and collaboration among:
 - i. federal and state agencies and laboratories
 - ii. land-grant colleges and universities, and
 - iii. the private sector

Projects must meet one or more of the objectives in the program areas outlined below. Please note that proposals need not meet all of the objectives for any given program area to be considered for funding. Proposals must show displacement of petroleum through the enhancement of the bio-based economy.

If you have questions regarding acceptability of a project topic, contact the SGW staff to discuss prior to submitting the Letter of Intent.

A. Decentralized and distributed energy systems

Projects meeting this goal should develop more decentralized and distributed systems which work better with regional biomass feedstocks. The projects should also have greater possibilities for capital retention within the region and for rural economic development. Projects should focus on methodologies and preprocessing technologies that will deliver a higher quantity and quality of raw materials to the processing or conversion facility in a sustainable fashion. Projects should also give attention to the development of valuable co-products for added rural economic development.

Goal:

To develop or improve smaller scale, decentralized or mobile conversion or processing technologies that address feedstock pre-processing, and produce efficient separations of biomass components parts, intermediate building block, separation efficiencies and process streams, and quantification of processing yields and efficiencies.

Objectives

1. To develop efficient, economical and environmentally sound, decentralized or mobile conversion processes for renewable crops, biomass residues or waste streams. Activities could include conversion efficiency, cost of production, enzymatic or thermo-chemical conversion.
2. To develop efficient, economical and environmentally sound, decentralized or mobile conversion processes for renewable crops, biomass residues or waste streams. Activities could include improvements in conversion efficiency, cost of production, biological or thermochemical conversion.

3. To develop integrated hub and spoke systems for the conversion of feedstocks into intermediate building blocks or biofuels and other bio products.
4. To mitigate environmental and social impacts associated with decentralized or distributed biofuel production using sustainable practices.

Benchmarks/Desired Outcomes:

Short term

1. Identify improved processing technologies for feedstock conversion and separation of biomass components.
2. Develop proof of concept.
3. Emission or discharge reduction or mitigation.
4. Intellectual products and technology transfer.

Long Term

1. Prioritize best choices for the region or subregion (e.g., tropics, arctic)
2. Make bioenergy production economically feasible

Evaluation/Metrics

- Strong scientific and technical merit
- Demonstrated expertise and facilities
- Strong project management and appropriate budget
- Potential for rural and/or economic development
- Enhances social and environmental benefits
- Integration of research, extension and education efforts
- Transferability of results

B. Novel feedstocks for bioenergy, bioproducts, and biofuels including agricultural or forestry residues

New feedstocks are needed that can serve to provide biomass from marginal lands or in rotation with existing crops across the western United States. Included in these feedstocks are new crops and new approaches to utilizing residues from existing agricultural practices, forestry practices and utilization of invasive species. Approaches are encouraged that can integrate new energy crops or waste streams into existing land use practices that create new opportunities for economic diversification for producers and commercial opportunities for producers of bioproducts and intermediate chemicals for production of those products.

Goal:

To develop biomass feedstocks that can be produced under existing land use, cropping systems, or natural resource harvesting regimes without displacing existing food, fiber, and forage production activities.

Objectives:

1. Develop and evaluate feedstocks that can serve as economically efficient and sustainable biomass sources under existing cropping and rotation systems or evaluate crops that can be produced on marginal lands with reduced inputs of nutrients and water.
2. Evaluate existing waste streams from agricultural and forestry production that can provide a sustainable and economically efficient source of biomass for bioproduct production. These proposals should include an evaluation of conversion processes that can utilize these feedstocks.
3. Restoration of rangelands and forest lands may involve the removal of unwanted or invasive species. Develop processes and economic models for incorporating these biomass sources into an integrated process for producing revenue streams from restoration efforts by converting the biomass into bioproducts.

Benchmarks/Desired Outcomes:

Short-term

1. Identify useful feedstocks that complement existing land use.
2. Characterize production and process economics
3. Create economic incentives for restoration

Long-term

1. Describe new opportunities for biomass production within the region that is economically and environmentally compatible with existing land use.
2. Widen the portfolio of potential biomass feedstocks for the region.

Evaluation/Metrics

- Strong scientific and technical merit
- Demonstrated expertise and facilities
- Strong project management and appropriate budget
- Potential for rural and/or economic development
- Enhances social and environmental benefits
- Integration of research, extension and education efforts
- Transferability of results

C. Life cycle analysis and sustainable production systems

The public, including the international community, has expressed concern that production of bioenergy feedstocks will displace commodities that would otherwise be dedicated to food. Also, there are debates regarding indirect land use issues. Agricultural production is complex and is not easily predicted by correlative assumptions. Farming systems that will preserve food production needs as well as stewardship of natural resources are highly desirable, as is field

research that provides standardized measurements of feedstock production impacts on the environment. Expert and multidisciplinary teams are needed to develop standardized measures that will in turn benefit other teams involved in modeling, life-cycle analysis and sustainability studies.

Goal

To develop life cycle analysis and sustainability information systems, and models and analysis that can be used to improve economics and feasibility of biomass and bioenergy production.

Objectives

1. To analyze systems such as industrial ecology, feedstock transport and delivery, and biofuel transport and delivery infrastructure to improve their economics and feasibility and to evaluate or manage the carbon footprint of such systems.
2. To assess and mitigate transportation safety in such systems or along the supply chain.
3. To identify appropriate resources to develop the supply chain.
4. To devise strategies to mitigate environmental impacts associated with production of biofuels, such as greenhouse gas emissions, carbon, energy balance, and NOX emissions, among others.
5. To mitigate environmental and social impacts associated with decentralized or distributed biofuel production using sustainable practices.
6. To enhance existing supply chain assessment models such as Argonne's GREET the US Department of Energy has established the **GREET Model (The Greenhouse Gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy Use in Transportation Model)** as the recognized model for analyzing life cycle analysis of biomass and other fuel systems. The URL for accessing this public domain Excel model is: <http://greet.es.anl.gov/>. Grant applications that propose to analyze feedstock and conversion process life cycle analysis should use GREET as the model framework or show how their model would improve upon the GREET model.

Benchmarks/Desired Outcomes

Short-term

1. Resources and input characterization.
2. Intellectual products and technology transfer that accrues.

Long-term

1. Increase in number of businesses established.
2. Measures of impacts on acreages.

Evaluation/Metrics

- Strong scientific and technical merit
- Demonstrated expertise and facilities
- Strong project management and appropriate budget

- Potential for rural and/or economic development
- Enhances social and environmental benefits
- Integration of research, extension and education efforts
- Transferability of results

2. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Principal investigators and key personnel must demonstrate competency to implement and complete a project, provide fiscal accountability, prepare project reports and demonstrate a willingness to share information with researchers and other interested parties. Principal investigators may be employed by a variety of institutions and organizations (see below).

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

The lead institution may be state agricultural experiment stations; colleges and universities; university research foundations; other research institutions and organizations; Federal agencies; national laboratories; private organizations or corporations; individuals; or group consisting of 2 or more of the entities described in this paragraph from within the Western region. It is not required that all members of the project team be affiliated with the above-listed institutions or be located within the Western region, only the lead principal investigator. There may be a limit on the number of projects in which one university can be the lead over a three year period in order to encourage broader participation of the region's LGUs.

Partnership among Western Region land grant institutions and small businesses, not-for-profit organizations, or other colleges and universities is encouraged.

COST-SHARE REQUIREMENTS

USDA requires successful applicants to demonstrate 25% auditable cost-share (i.e., a minimum of 20% cost share of the total project cost). For example, if the total project cost is \$125,000, then \$100,000 may be requested and \$25,000 must be provided as cost share. Grantees may provide cost-share through in-kind contributions, including faculty salaries, facilities or from state, local, non-profit or private matching funds. No federal funds may be used as matching funds.

Unrecovered indirect charges: Unrecovered indirect charges (i.e., the difference between the University negotiated federal rate and the 30% Total Federal Funding rate) may be used as part of the cost-share for research and integrated projects.

The matching requirement does not apply to *fundamental research*. Fundamental research means research that increases knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and has the potential for broad application. It should also have an effect on agriculture, food, nutrition, or the environment.

Up to 100% match is strongly recommended for demonstration or pilot projects. The amount of non-federal funding will be considered in the review process.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly reports (2-pages) and annual reports are required from all successful applicants and must be submitted in writing to the SGW. For multi-year projects, in addition to quarterly reports, an acceptable annual report is required for continuation of funds

Annual reports also must be presented at a yearly SGW Principal Investigator's symposium or National Sun Grant Conference (NSGC).

It is important to disseminate information from SGW funded projects. At least one product of significance, i.e., Experiment Station report, Extension bulletin or white paper is required for all funded projects. Ideally, at least one peer-reviewed article would result for each year of SGW funded research. Investigators must acknowledge USDA and SGW in all publications and presentations.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Each proposal must include a budget item for PI travel to the annual symposium (or NSGC) for presentation of results. The participation of at least one PI in an annual meeting event is required. The meeting locations are not yet defined for 2016 or 2017 but the symposium would be within the Western Region. The national conference may or may not be held in the region. We recommend budgeting between \$1,250 and \$1,500 per person attending.

3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Initial Registration for Webnibus online submission: New SGW applicants must register online for a user account to access the SGE Webnibus system. Type the following address into your web browser's address box or follow the link from the SGW website to:

https://webnibus.org/sungrant/western/logn/login_login.php

Once at the Webnibus site, use the "Sign up" link under **New to Webnibus?** You will be asked to input your email address and contact information. A password will be randomly generated and emailed to the email address you provide. You can change your password after you log-in with the password sent to you.

Creating an application account: The PI must create an account for the LOI/Proposal. Upon entering Webnibus, select '**2016 Western USDA**' from the pull down menu. Enter the proposal title, as well as estimated start and end dates. Most projects are expected to begin around September 1, 2016.

Note, the PI may allow other team members to edit the proposal by specifying editing permissions. To access the proposal, click on the proposal title.

Online certification – Proposal sign-off sheet: The PI must make the application package available to approvers at his/her institution and all approvers must be able to log into the online system. Prior to proposal submission, all PI's and co-PIs must certify agreement with the proposal package content. In addition, if appropriate for your institution – Department Heads, Deans/Directors, Department/College Accountants, and other Authorized Representatives must also certify agreement with the proposal package content. Clicking the **Certify Approval** link will substitute for signatures on the application package sign-off sheet.

CONTENT AND FORMAT OF APPLICATION

It is recommended that PIs review the application elements and create a Submission Checklist to avoid delays in completion or submission of the application.

Letter Of Intent

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) (deadline of Monday, February 1, 2016) prior to submitting a full proposal for review and consideration. The LOI is not binding on the content of the full proposal. The LOI is limited to 4000 characters (approximately two pages, double-spaces) and should provide adequate information to allow the SGW to select reviewers and expedite the 2016 peer review and selection process.

The LOI should contain:

1. Cover page information:
 - a. Descriptive Title for the proposed project (please indicate if this is a new or a re-submission of a previously submitted proposal)
 - b. Names and contact information of Principal and Co-Investigators
 - c. Estimated request for funds
 - d. Amount and Sources of match for the project

2. Body of the letter (no more than two pages of at least 12 point font) must address the following questions:
 - a. What problem or opportunity is to be addressed?
 - b. Why is this project important?
 - c. List the proposed project objectives.
 - d. Provide a brief and general description of the project approach.
 - e. Identify potential collaborators and beneficiaries.
 - f. List up to 3 suggested reviewers/affiliations with no potential conflict of interest.

- 3. Please indicate which priority program area is emphasized in your project.**

When you are finished with all elements listed on the LOI menu, click on the SUBMIT button.

After February 28, 2016 you may return to Webnibus to begin submission of your full proposal information.

Full Application

The full proposal application is to be entered into Webnibus. It is recommended to prepare your proposal sections using word processing software and then follow the online directions. Many elements can be copied and pasted to the online boxes.

Upon entering Webnibus, click on the title of your proposal. You will be directed to the full proposal menu:

1. PI Biosketch
2. Senior Personnel
3. Title Page
4. Proposal Sign-Off Sheet
5. Proposal Summary
6. Pre-Proposal Narrative (contains the LOI previously submitted)
7. Full Proposal Narrative
8. Budget Forms
9. Budget Justification
10. Suggested Reviewers
11. File Attachments
12. Certify Proposal
13. Print

Full proposal applications should include the elements listed below. Submissions omitting any of these items will be considered non-responsive. The components are to be entered into the online proposal system as directed. The proposal narrative should be completed in a word processing software and then uploaded into the system as a single pdf file. Elements of the proposal include

1. PI BIOSKETCH

The biosketch is essentially a 2-page resume or curriculum vitae.

2. SENIOR PERSONNEL

Senior personnel are the key members of your project, i.e., co-PIs.

3. TITLE PAGE

Note that funds requested and cost-share amounts are automatically filled in by the system from the information in the budget pages.

4. PROPOSAL SIGN-OFF SHEET

Sign-off sheets are required for all proposals. This form identifies basic proposal/investigator information as well as provides a summary of basic compliance issues relative to the project.

NOTE: A copy of the **institutional negotiated rate agreements** for non-Oregon State University institutions) should be attached as a single pdf file to the proposal system when the proposals are submitted online.

5. PROPOSAL SUMMARY (200 words or less)

The proposal summary is broken down into key words, objectives, methodology, rationale, and expected outcomes. You can prepare your information and then copy and paste into the form boxes as appropriate.

6. PRE-PROPOSAL NARRATIVE (i.e., LOI)

You will not need to or be able to edit your LOI. It is included here for your convenience and reference.

7. FULL PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

The page limit is 15 pages, double spaced, including graphics and tables, but excluding references, using a 12-point font, with at least 1-inch margins. The narrative must include the following:

- a) Statement of project goals and objectives
- b) Statement of project's relevance to Sun Grant mission
- c) Significance of the work in its specific field and in the broader context of achieving the goals of the SGW and USDA. Please include descriptions of how the proposed work relates to other ongoing or completed work by the principal or other investigators and the implications of the work for public policy issues.
- d) Description of the project approach and activity (research, education, or extension). Describe the techniques and approaches to be taken to achieve the goals outlined above, including methods for analyzing and interpreting data.
- e) List of specific tasks to be performed, as an itemized list, and a timetable for completing those tasks
- f) Role of each member of the project team, including collaborators

References should follow the proposal narrative but these pages are not included in the page limitation.

8. BUDGET WORKSHEETS

Create a separate budget worksheet for each year of the proposed work. Applicants must provide a 25% cost-share and limit indirect to 30% TFF. Cost-share must be fully auditable and are to be monitored by the applicant's institution, and confirmed to Oregon State University.

Subawards to other institutions:

- Work plans, budgets and justifications for subawards should be compiled and attached as a single pdf file to the proposal system.
- Indirect and cost-share instructions apply to sub-awards as well.

9. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION/NARRATIVE

Include a detailed budget narrative through the provided online text boxes. The justification is used to fully explain your expenses and is broken down into the primary budget categories: Personnel, Equipment (>\$5,000), Expendable supplies and minor equipment; Travel; Other (subcontracts, consultants, computer time, publications, GRA tuition, etc.); F&A charges.

Contributing organizations (please use the format: "Organization: contribution type and amount'). It is recommended that contributors or collaborators provide a Letter of Support that describes the role of the collaborators and that they have agreed to render services or funds.

10. SUGGESTED REVIEWERS

Provide names and contact information for up to three possible reviewers of your proposal. These may be the same ones listed in your LOI.

11. FILE ATTACHMENTS (REQUIRED)

- a. **Logic Model (diagram or narrative)** (see generic model on SGW website)
- b. **Current and Pending Research** (form provided on SGW website) - Include the project title, agency or foundation sponsoring the research, period of support, time commitment, and amount of award.
- c. **Potential Conflicts of Interest** (form provided on the SGW website)
- d. **Negotiated Institutional Rate Agreement for non-OSU institutions**

Combine like items before converting into a pdf document and attaching

12. FILE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL, AS NEEDED)

You may want to attach supporting documentation such as letters of support or subaward information (scope of work, budgets and budget narratives). Similar types of information should be compiled together, e.g., all subawards, all support letters, and it is recommended that you use PDF files. Such formats and consolidation facilitates the work of the reviewers.

4. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

PEER REVIEW PROCESS and CRITERIA

1. All applications will undergo a rigorous review process, which will include a technical peer review by scientists working in the appropriate fields. Proposals will also undergo review by the Sun Grant Advisory Committee (AC) before being accepted for funding and forwarding to USDA for final funding approval. Decisions will be made on the basis of the following factors:
 - **Scientific and Technical Merit (50%)**
 - Originality and innovativeness of the concept and approach
 - Conceptual adequacy of research, as applicable
 - Clarity of objectives and presentation of information
 - Adequacy of methodology proposed
 - Feasibility of methodology to achieve objectives
 - Likelihood of success as proposed
 - **Qualifications of the Investigator(s), Adequacy of Facilities, Project Management, and Costs (25%)**
 - Awareness of previous work or strategies
 - Appropriate expertise or collaborators included
 - Level to which stakeholders were involved in project planning and implementation
 - Planning and implementation strategies
 - Adequate outreach program and strategies
 - **Project Relevance (25%)**
 - Appropriateness of the proposal in addressing Sun Grant's mission and the research priorities of the region
 - Relevance to USDA strategic areas of interest
 - Degree to which there is potential for project implementation, adoption and impact
2. A panel of experts will be assembled for the technical peer review. A lead panelist in each of the subfields is identified and tasked with leading the discussion on that set of proposals. A secondary reviewer is also identified to present additional information. The full panel will provide input on the technical merits of the proposal. The full list of prioritized proposals is submitted to the SGW Advisory Committee or their designee(s) for a programmatic review.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

The Advisory Committee or their designee(s) will review the list of recommended projects and evaluate them against their relevance to the priority needs of the region. The SGW will seek to achieve a portfolio of research and education projects to address the bioenergy development priorities of the region. Therefore, relevance to meeting the priority needs of the region may form the basis for selection among projects deemed of equivalent merit and quality. The Advisory Committee will recommend a short list of priority projects to the SGW directors and USDA for their funding consideration.

5. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Program management will be handled by the SGW. Contracts and payments for the awards will be written and distributed from Oregon State University (OSU). Reports and reviews will be collected and maintained by OSU. Composite reports will be provided to USDA quarterly and annually. The latter will be submitted in narrative form and in the USDA Current Information System.

The SGW staff will be responsible for reviewing reports and providing feedback to investigators. The Advisory Committee will review final reports for potential impacts throughout the region and for adjustment of program priorities.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

SGW and the Subcenter will notify applicants in writing of grant decisions by June 30, 2016. As part of the grant decision, SGW may negotiate specific grant terms with investigators. Masked reviews will be provided to the principal investigator.

CONFIDENTIALITY/PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Confidentiality will be maintained in the proposal review process, and proposals will not be used for any purpose other than evaluation of merit for funding. Applicants are encouraged to draw attention to confidential or proprietary information contained in the proposal or submitted reports.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly and annual reports of progress must be submitted by each funded project to it to be considered for continuation of funding. A reporting template will be distributed along with a reporting schedule. Each project should include a budget item for PI travel to an annual Sun Grant symposium or conference to report project results. PI participation in this meeting is mandatory.

CONTINUATION OF FUNDING

Continuation of funding will be determined by previous year's performance, as well as continued funding from the funding agency.

6. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. I lost my Webnibus password. How can I reset it?

A. From the login page, select “Reset my password” and follow the directions.

Q. How can I change my random password?

A. Sign into the Webnibus site using the random password. Then, go to MAIN MENU, YOUR ACCOUNT and you will be able to reset your password.

Q. I was editing my proposal and I accidentally hit the “Certify” button. Can you un-certify?

A. You can continue to edit your proposal even after it is certified. We are not able to Un-certify, but it will not prevent you from making further edits.

Q. I am trying to input the budget fringe benefit rate category but it is calculating an incorrect number.

A. All rates (fringe benefits and indirect cost rates) need to be inputted as 0.XXX. For example, 27.5% benefit rate needs to be expressed as 0.275.

Q. Why is the indirect cost rate limited to 30% Total Federal Funds (TFF)?

The indirect cost rate is limited to the institution’s federally negotiated indirect cost rate OR 30% Total Federal Funds (TFF), whichever is less. The indirect cost rate was set by the original funding source. For use with your Office of Sponsored Program, the following funding opportunity citations are offered:

USDA negotiated rate or 30.00% of TDC, whichever is less. The indirect cost rate was set as identified in section 7526 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (Pub. L. 110-246) (7 U.S.C. 8114) as amended in 2014.

Q. I logged in and created a new proposal. However, I am in the Pre-proposal/Letter of Intent menu. How do I get to the Full Proposal Menu?

A. Once your pre-proposal/letter of intent has been submitted, you will be able to see the full proposal menu with your preproposal information. If you do not see the full proposal menu, call us at 541-737-2405 or send an email to sungrant@oregonstate.edu .

Q. Where is the annual Sun Grant PI conference being held in 2016 or 2017? We need to include travel for attendance in our budget.

A. The annual meeting locations are not yet defined but would be within the Western region. You have the option of attending the National Sun Grant Conference in alternate years. We recommend budgeting between \$1,250 and \$1,500 per person for each project year.

Q. Can Approvers make changes to the Proposal and/or Budget?

A. No. Approvers can only view the proposal, not edit it. Approvers can **submit comments** to the proposal and **CERTIFY** it.

Q. Do the other institutions involved in our project need to be within the same SUNGRANT region? We have several potential collaborators in mind - some are within region others are in other SUNGRANT regions.

A. The lead institution that submits the application must be from the Western region. Others outside the region or outside the Land Grant system can participate as a collaborator/co-investigator on your proposal.

Q. We would like to collaborate with a Federal employee or organization on our proposal. Is this permitted?

A. Yes. Anyone can participate. However no funding may be transferred from Sun Grant competitive (federal) funds to other Federal institutions under our current USDA grants. The collaboration could not result in Sun Grant funding (for travel, as an example) for the Federal employee or institution.

Q. We would like to use Sun Grant funds to purchase items such as equipment (greater than \$5000) or other items that we would like to re-sell during or after the project. Is this permitted?

A. Please keep in mind that using Federal dollars to purchase items that could subsequently be sold will create significant Federal reporting and permission requirements for the applicant's institution.

Q. May we submit our budget using an Excel sheet or word processing software document sheet?

A. In order to streamline the review process, we are asking that all applicants use the online Webnibus budget forms for the 2016 application. If you are having difficulty filling in the form feel free to call us for help. (Karen Bose 541-737-5915 or Gretchen Cuevas 541-737-2405).

Q. How do I add my institution's indirect charges (Facilities and Administrative)?

A. Input your institution's allowable indirect charge rate (limited to the institution's negotiated indirect cost rate OR 30% TFF, whichever is less for). In most cases this will be "0.30". The indirect charges will be automatically calculated from this value.

Q When filling out the budget worksheet, indirect charges are automatically calculated on most budget lines. Where do I place OTHER cost items that do not require indirect charges?

A. Below item "J" there is a line called "OTHER COSTS NOT REQUIRING INDIRECT". Click on "(Input Other Cost No Indirect)". Indirect charges are not calculated for these items.

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