Washington Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
Competitive Proposals Policy
November 12, 2026

There are several competitive research funding opportunities offered by state agency cooperators that fund research likely to fall within the mission of the Washington Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit (WACFWRU), such as aquatic invasive plant funding offered by Washington Department of Ecology, wildlife diversity funding offered by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and periodic one-off competitive opportunities potentially offered by any agency. In these cases, indirect cost rates available through the WACFWRU can be made available for projects headed by UW and WSU scientists who submit successful proposals. However, the competitive proposal process does not lend itself well to the State Project Workflow followed by the WACFWRU (see depts.washington.edu/wacfwru/working-with-the-wacfwru/). Therefore, for competitive proposals, the WACFWRU will adopt the following process:

1. To avoid delays before proposal due dates, the Unit Leader will be tasked with making the decision of whether the proposed work falls within the Unit's mission (this decision is usually made by both the agency's Cooperating Committee member and the Unit Leader). Investigators preparing proposals will be asked to submit a project description (see Project Template, page 2 of this document) to the Unit Administrator, who will submit it to the Unit Leader for approval.
2. If the Unit Leader confirms that the project fits within the Unit mission, the investigator will be encouraged to use the WACFWRU's approved reduced indirect rate (18% on total direct costs at both UW and WSU) in their budgeting and should indicate in the budget that awarded funding would come through the WACFWRU.
3. Investigators should contact the Unit administrator as soon as possible once they decide to pursue funding to ensure that they obtain approval from the Unit Leader and that proposal documents are correctly completed and on time. If the investigator is at UW, final application documents need to be submitted to the Unit Administrator a minimum of two weeks in advance of the proposal deadline (three weeks if the proposal involves subawards). This is the required time necessary to prepare materials and process the proposal through internal UW channels. WSU investigators should account for WSU's internal deadlines once they obtain approval from the Unit Leader.
4. If the RFP involves a pre-proposal that must be submitted for approval before a full proposal is requested, approval should still be sought at the pre-proposal stage from the Unit Leader, but the timeline can typically be much shorter. PIs should contact the Unit Leader as soon as they know they intend to submit a pre-proposal to determine the timeline.

For additional questions, investigators are welcome to reach out to Sarah Converse, Unit Leader, at sconver@uw.edu or Sarah Romero, Unit Administrator, at sarahjh@uw.edu.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

Please use this template to develop your project description. Project descriptions will not ordinarily exceed 1-2 pages.

Project Title: *Include long title (i.e., "Constructing a modeling tool for wolf status review in Washington" is an appropriate title, whereas "UW Wolf Project" is not)*

Principal Investigator: *Include PI name, university department, university, email, and phone* (If there are multiple PIs, provide this information for each PI)

State Agency Technical Lead: *Include name, job title, agency division, agency, email, and phone*

Expected Start Date: *This can be revised if needed – use best judgment*

Expected End Date: *This can be revised if needed – use best judgment*

Abstract: *The abstract should describe project goals, methods, and expected outcomes, and must clearly articulate how the project fits within the mission of the WACFWRU. Briefly: The Washington Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit works to support conservation of fish, wildlife, and their habitats in Washington, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. Project leads can consult the policy on project fit for more information: (depts.washington.edu/wacfwru/working-with-the-wacfwru/).*

Budget. *Include a brief budget sketch with amounts in major categories (e.g., personnel, supplies, equipment, subcontracts, and indirect). Beginning in Washington State fiscal year 2025, all approved projects will be subject to a reduced indirect rate of 18% at both WSU and UW (assessed on total direct costs), unless the lead PI is a federally employed Unit staff member (i.e., Converse, McInturff, or Scheuerell), in which case the project will be subject to 0% indirect.*