FY2024 Request for Applications
Pilot/Feasibility Program

The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education (SW Ag Center) supports the Pilot/Feasibility Program (PFP) to promote health and safety in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (AgFF) occupations. **The goals of this program are to:** 1) Identify and mentor new/junior researchers to conduct innovative research, intervention, and translation projects in AgFF worker safety/health; 2) Support projects that provide data for innovative approaches to improve AgFF occupational safety and health that justify further research, and; 3) Promote mentoring relationships between junior and established scientists to build capacity for AgFF occupational safety and health careers. The SW Ag Center (U54OH007541) is one of twelve Centers currently funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). The SW Ag Center serves U.S. Public Health Service Region 6 (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX). https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/oep/agctrhom.html

Eligibility
- Junior investigators interested in gaining research experience in AgFF occupational safety or health
- Graduate students, medical residents and interns, or postdoctoral fellows
- Faculty members of any rank who are interested in exploring an AgFF research question
- Applications from student investigators and other scientists new to the field of agricultural occupational safety and health are strongly encouraged.
- Team science approaches are encouraged.

Programmatic Interest
PFP projects should have a well-defined, narrow scope with achievable goals. NIOSH has established the following priority areas for AgFF. (https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/agff/)
- Reduce occupational neurologic disorders and renal disease stemming from pesticide exposure.
- Reduce occupational infectious and dermal disease to pesticides and total body burden.
- Reduce occupational musculoskeletal disorders, which are soft-tissue injuries caused by sudden or sustained exposure to repetitive motion, force, vibration, and awkward positions.
- Reduce occupational respiratory diseases including fixed airway diseases such as COPD and obliterative bronchiolitis.
- Improve workplace safety to reduce traumatic injuries among high-risk populations.
- Promote safe and healthy work design for workers in precarious employment arrangements, and reduce injuries and illnesses related to work design, fatigue, and mental health.

Priority will be given to proposals addressing the above topics as well as mental and behavioral health, extreme weather/climate change, migrant/immigrant workers, nanomaterial hazards, PFAS chemical hazards, avian flu, fatigue, shift work, and heat stress. Other topics related to improving the safety and health of AgFF workers will be considered. All proposed projects must respond to the goals of the National Occupational Research Agenda for AgFF and the goals must be explicitly stated in the proposal. To review the National Occupational Research Agenda – AgFF visit https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/agff/research.html.

Key Dates

Application Deadline:	May 15, 2023
Notice of Award:	July 31, 2023
Anticipated Start Date:	October 2, 2023
Number of Awards:	Up to 2
Duration of Award:	12 months
Award Amount:	up to $20,000

NOTE: We may also have limited funding available for short-term projects. Successful projects will be very focused to support a 6-8 month timeline. Analysis of secondary data is a good example of a short-term project. Application requirements are the same as our normal PFP, but the deadline for submission is December 30th with an anticipated start date in February or March.

Award

- Funds are awarded considering the scientific merit of the proposal, fit with the SW Ag Center mission and priority areas, and the NIOSH National Occupational Research Agenda for AgFF.
- The project period is for a maximum twelve-month period.
- Awards will be up to $20,000 (inclusive of direct and indirect costs).
- The cap for indirect costs is 8%.
- Equipment purchased for the project vests to the institution sponsoring the project.
- PIs will receive review comments and a funding decision by July 31st.

Expectations of Applicant

- Documentation of IRB (or animal protections) approval must be provided within 45 days of award.
- Successful applicants will provide an oral progress report three months after the project start date.
- A final status report will be due 60 days after the project end date:
  - Findings/results in the form of a manuscript for a peer-reviewed publication.
  - List of planned grant applications based on pilot study data.
  - List of manuscript(s) based on pilot study data and journals to receive manuscripts.
- The final financial status (invoice) report will be due 60 days after the end of the approved project budget period.
- Investigators will be required to present their project at the Southwest Centers Occupational Health Research Symposium held annually in July.
- The investigator must acknowledge support from the NIOSH SW Ag Center in all publications and presentations resulting from the award. Language will be provided in the award letter.
- One year after the project end date, the PI will complete a report documenting grant and manuscript submission(s) using project data.
- Progress of awardees will be tracked for 3 years.

Contact

Please contact Kevin Moore, PhD at kevin.moore@okstate.edu or by phone to 405-744-8423 to indicate your intent to submit an application or for any questions you have related to the application. For additional information about the SW Ag Center visit: www.swagcenter.org.

Application Instructions

Our application requirements are based on those of an NIH research project. The following website may be helpful as you prepare your application. https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/write-your-application.htm

Your application should include the following:
1. Subrecipient Commitment Form (see separate form)
2. Detailed budget for funding period (see separate R&R Budget form)
    i. Awards will be up to $20,000 (inclusive of direct and indirect costs).
    ii. The cap for indirect costs is 8%.
3. Budget justification describing each item of the proposed budget and its relevance to the proposed research (two-page limit)
    i. Include time and effort percentages for each person listed on the grant.
4. Biosketch(es)
    i. Please provide a biographical sketch for the PI and key personnel following the NIH format (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm).
5. Specific Aims (one-page limit)
    i. You may find the following paper by Monte and Libby helpful as you prepare the specific aims section. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/acem.13419.
6. Research Strategy (five-page limit)
    i. A review panel will evaluate your application and score each of the following areas. Be sure to clearly address these in your application.
        - Significance: Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field?
        - Investigator(s): Are the PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project?
        - Innovation: Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?
        - Approach: Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project?
        - Environment: Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?
7. Bibliography and References Cited

Additional documents:
1. Mentoring Plan (one-half-page limit)
    i. Describe how the mentor will work with the PI to facilitate the development of research skills, manuscripts/reports, and additional related grant applications. *(Please contact us if you need assistance identifying a mentor.)* A **Mentoring Plan** should include the following:
        - Appropriateness of mentor's research qualifications in the area of this application.
        - Quality and extent of mentor's role in providing guidance and advice to candidate.
        - Previous experience in fostering the development of other junior researchers.
        - History of productivity and support.
        - Adequacy of support for the research project.
    ii. You should also include a letter of support from the mentor addressing the following:
        - His/her qualifications in the research area proposed by the candidate.
        - Previous experience as a research supervisor.
        - The nature and extent of supervision that will occur during the award period.

- An evaluation component that describes how your mentors will assess your progress (e.g., quarterly meetings).
- What resources, if any, they will make available to you in support of your training and/or research.

2. Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals (if applicable)
   i. Provide a discussion as to how human subjects and/or vertebrate animals will be addressed in the project. An approved IRB / IACUC plan is not required with the application, but must be provided within 45 days of award.
3. Other letters of support (if applicable)

Formatting
Please use 11 point or larger font in Arial or Times New Roman, and page margins of at least ½ inch.

Submission Process
The completed application should be submitted electronically in pdf format to kevin.moore@okstate.edu. Confirmation of receipt will be emailed to the applicant.