

Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation UConn Faculty Climate Research Seed Grants Call for Project Planning Letter

DESCRIPTION

The University of Connecticut's (UConn) Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) seeks applications for seed grants from UConn faculty. These awards are intended to support the development of competitive grant proposals that advance [CIRCA's mission](#). Projects that address CIRCA's priorities and complement existing capacity will be preferred. The proposal resulting from the seed grant project should be submitted within one year of the CIRCA grant completion. Seed grant projects should be completed in 12 months.

Proposals should address research on at least one of the following CIRCA priority research topics:

1. Pilot experiments/surveys to develop preliminary data to characterize how natural processes and social interactions will be modified by climate change.
2. Novel analysis approaches to characterize climate change impacts on humans, the economy, or Connecticut ecosystems.
3. The development of methods to characterize socioeconomic impacts of climate change on Connecticut communities.
4. The development and demonstration of approaches to assess the effectiveness of engagement strategies used in adaptation planning in the diverse array of Connecticut communities.
5. The development and evaluation of innovative approaches to resilient engineering and adaptation in Connecticut (e.g. green infrastructure to address erosion and stormwater, heat islands).
6. The development and evaluation of innovative financing approaches for adaptation and resilience actions.

The researchers can apply for either of the tracks below:

Track 1: Pilot Research to Assist External Grant Application

- The seed grant funds research to support an external grant proposal.
- The project deliverables should be submitted within one year of the CIRCA grant completion.
- The project should be completed in a year.
- The budget should be less than \$15,000.

Track 2: Full Project to Improve Resiliency Capacity

- Project addresses CIRCA priorities and complements existing capacity.
- The project deliverables should be completed in a year.
- The budget should be less than \$50,000.

IMPORTANT DATES

December 15, 2023: Call for RFP

January 12, 2024: Research Symposium and RFP information

March 17, 2024: Proposals due by 11:59 PM

Mid- April 2024: Awardees announced

June 2024-2025: Award period

ELIGIBILITY

1. The Principal Investigator (PI) must be eligible to submit external proposals and be a member of CIRCA's affiliated faculty list. If not already on this list, the PI can fill out a request form on CIRCA's [Affiliated Faculty & Staff webpage](#).
2. Eligible faculty may only submit one proposal as PI or Co-PI.
3. The project should amplify the likelihood of the PI's success, develop a new research theme, or foster a new interdisciplinary collaboration.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Proposals will be screened to ensure they address the mission of CIRCA. Ranking will consider:

1. how the project outcomes complement the activities and advance the mission of CIRCA (30%)
2. the novelty and significance of the proposed research (20%)
3. the effectiveness of the research plan (20%)
4. the qualifications of the team (10%)
5. whether the project expands CIRCA's support for Faculty and students (10%)
6. effectiveness of budget use and matching/leverage (10%)

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be submitted electronically as a single file PDF by e-mail to circa@uconn.edu for receipt no later than 11:59 **p.m. EST on March 17, 2024**. Specify "CIRCA Research Proposal" in the subject line. Please save the single file PDF as "ResearchSeed_[LASTNAME]". Proposals that are not received by the deadline will not be considered. Proposals that fail to comply with content, format, and length requirements will not be considered.

Proposals should contain the following elements and follow the structure and guidelines indicated below. All length guidelines assume 1-inch margins, 11-12 point fonts, single spacing, single-sided pages. A full proposal should include:

1. **Cover Page (1 page)**
 - a. Which track is being applied
 - b. Project title
 - c. Names, affiliations, department, title/position, and contact information for each of the principal and co-principal investigators

- d. Summary: in 300 words or less describe the project, the potential impact for a general audience
- e. Total project budget

2. Research Plan (4-page maximum)

- a. Project Overview – Provide information about the proposed project. The concept for a future external grant application should also be described, including how CIRCA’s proposed seed grant will help the research team develop a more competitive external grant.
- b. Research Strategy – This section should describe which of CIRCA’s six research priorities is targeted by the work. Multiple priorities can be addressed but should be clearly stated. Include a brief description of the research significance and approach under separate subheadings. The significance should focus on the larger research questions that will be addressed by a future external grant application or how the research will complement the existing resilience work. The approach portion of the Research Strategy should focus on the methodology that will be followed for the project that is being funded by the seed grant.
- c. Timeline – Describe the project timeline with major tasks and deliverables, including participation in the CIRCA organized meetings stated in the deliverables. Please include the expected timeframe for submitting an external grant for Track 1 application.

3. Proposed Project’s Relationship to Current Research. (2-page maximum)

Provide a brief description of how the proposed project is related to any current projects being conducted by the PI(s) and CIRCA.

4. Relevant References

5. Biographical Sketch of PI(s) in NIH or NSF format

6. Current and Pending Support List for the PI(s) in NIH or NSF format

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Project Personnel (1 page). Briefly describe the roles of all people working on the project. If there is more than one PI, describe the individual project responsibilities of each PI.

8. Budget with Justification (3-page maximum). Please provide the excel budget using the UConn Template and its justifications.

9. Other Sources of Support for the Project State if there is any matching funds or leverage with other projects. (e.g., additional funding, in-kind services, equipment, etc. that will not be supported by this grant).

10. Letters of Support (if applicable, e.g. town planners, outcome users)

Allowable Expenses

- Supplies, equipment, reagents, facility use, and publication costs
- Graduate student stipend, benefits, and tuition
- Postdoctoral or Research Scientist support and benefits

- Travel, conference/workshop attendance, or conference/workshop hosting for team-building to support the proposal submission for external funding

Unallowable Expenses

- Faculty academic year salary and/or benefits. Summer support is permitted.
- Transfer of funds to institutions or individuals outside of UConn.
- Administrative or secretarial support
- Indirect costs

AWARD CONDITIONS and DELIVERABLES

All awards are required to comply with UConn policies, budget, and reporting procedures.

1. Investigators will provide a final report to CIRCA that will include:
 - Executive summary of the project for a non-technical audience – 500 words
 - Project background and context
 - Explanation of how the project advanced CIRCA mission and priority research area(s)
 - Project description, including goals and methods
 - Outcomes and products, including a description of the planned external grant application
2. The project reports and products will be published through the CIRCA website and/or in printed form. Copies of all project products are also required upon request (manuscripts, maps, photos, presentations, tools, data files, etc. as appropriate).
3. Awardees will submit quarterly 1 page progress updates on the research and 6 month and before the end of project meetings with CIRCA team.
4. Awardees will also present their project at the end of the research period in CIRCA decided event. This event can be in-person or virtual.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions should be directed to circa@uconn.edu

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Investigators are encouraged to review the circa.uconn.edu and resilientconnecticut.uconn.edu websites to learn more about ongoing research and former grant projects.

FOIA Statement

The information and materials submitted to CIRCA for consideration under this funding program are subject to the terms of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") and all applicable rules, regulations and administrative decisions regarding their disclosure to third parties. The information and materials submitted are exempt from disclosure until a determination has been made whether to fund a

specific proposal. If an individual or entity is interested in preserving the confidentiality of any part of its proposal, whether funded or not, it will not be sufficient merely to state generally in the proposal that the proposal is proprietary or confidential in nature and not, therefore, subject to release to third parties. Instead, those particular sentences, paragraphs, pages or sections that an individual or entity believe to be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA must be specifically identified as such and accompanied by an explanation and rationale sufficient to justify each exemption consistent with § 1-210(b) of the FOIA. The rationale and explanation must be stated in terms of the reasons the materials are legally exempt from release pursuant to the FOIA. UConn, DEEP, and CIRCA will identify as protected from disclosure of such materials to the extent permitted by FOIA and all applicable rules, regulations and administrative decisions. Any final determination on the status of a specific document withheld from disclosure may be determined by the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission and the courts, if applicable.