



Challenge Grant Program Request for Proposals

Deadline: Monday, May 15, 2017, 11:59:59 PM (PDT)

The 2017-2018 UC Water Challenge Grant Program invites University of California principal investigators to apply for a one-year Challenge Grant that will support UC Water research initiatives, enhance cooperation among campuses, and facilitate critical California water resources research.

In the interest of expanding UC Water's network of UC-affiliated water researchers to emergent water challenges and solutions, we encourage proposal for research projects that support **water resources decision-making** in the following areas:

- Water information and accounting: linking data and decision-making
- Groundwater management: innovation for implementation of SGMA
- Social, cultural, and political perspectives on water management
- Economics, financing, and funding: challenges and opportunities for water institutions, information, and infrastructure
- Ecological research: ecosystem services and groundwater-dependent ecosystems.

We seek interdisciplinary proposals for research projects that explicitly articulate how they would support improved decision-making in California water management. We encourage co-produced research and practice projects that are formed in partnership with water agencies and decision-makers. Successful proposals will define their linkages to information, institutions, or infrastructure and will complement one of our four foci:

- Water Resources Information and Accounting
- Groundwater Institutions, Resources, and Technology
- Headwater Management
- Food-Energy-Water Systems.

Evidence that the applicant can leverage the proposed research into additional funding will be viewed favorably. Early career faculty are encouraged to apply.

Total funds available for 2017-2018: \$200,000.

Approximately \$100,000 will be dispersed in 2017. The remainder will be dispersed in 2018.

Project Awards: \$10,000 - \$60,000.

There are two types of awards:

Match Funds:

- Up to \$30,000 awards are available to augment existing projects in one of the key areas.
- Existing projects can be newly funded and used as match, or can be used as continuation funds. They cannot be used for *potentially* funded projects.
- These funds will be for work at one or more UC campuses.

Seed Funds:

- Up to \$60,000 awards are available to seed new collaborations focused on at least two of three UC Water focal areas (information, infrastructure, institutions).
- Seed projects must be newly proposed collaborations, with investigators from two or more UC campuses. Funds must reside at two or more UC campuses.

All funds must be spent within 12 months of award. No-cost extensions will not be granted. All public presentations, publications, and disseminated data emanating from these funds will acknowledge the UC Water Security and Sustainability Research Initiative. Recipients will present findings at the UC Water Annual Retreat and join UC Water as an investigator.

Timeline:

4/5/17	RFP for 2017-2018 UC Water Challenge Grant proposals announced.
5/15/17, 11:59:59 PDT	Submission Deadline for online proposals.
6/1/17	Final judging and selection of awards
6/15/17	Disbursement of funds to 2017 awards
1/15/18	Disbursement of funds to 2018 awards*

*2018 awards are dependent upon UCOP multi-campus research initiative approval for annual funding.

Requirements

Match Funds

Proposed project must be an existing project for which funding has been secured, with funding in place or to be expended during the project period for the proposed UC Water award. While the UC Water project can be a collaboration among UC Water investigators across one or more UC campuses, it can also be a single-investigator project. Funds are intended to benefit existing activities as non-federal match, or continuation through augmentation. Funds will not be disbursed to any non-UC entity.

Collaborations between UC investigators are allowed (existing or new) but are not required for Match Funds. Each investigator on the matching funds proposal must become a UC Water investigator.

Seed Funds

A proposed project must be a collaboration among UC Water investigators on at least two UC campuses. Funds will not be disbursed to any non-UC entity. Collaborations between investigators can be existing, though new and novel collaborations are encouraged. Each investigator on the matching funds proposal must become a UC Water investigator. Please identify the decision-making context in which the proposed research will function and be clear in how the research will improve decision-making.

Seed Fund Projects must further two or more of the three UC Water focal areas. Proposals focused on wicked problems, interdisciplinary research, and cross-cutting themes such as "water security" or "big data in water resources" are also encouraged.

Exclusions

UC Water Challenge Grant Funding may not be used for faculty salary or non-resident tuition. UC Water investigators may participate in no more than two Challenge Grant proposals per year and serve as lead researcher on no more than one per year.

Submission Instructions:

We recommend gathering all of your application materials (described in detail below) before starting this online application. **Please complete your full proposal upload in one session**, as the form does not allow for exiting and resuming.

Online submission: <https://form.jotform.us/citrisucmerced/challengegrant>

Step 1: Complete this online Project Proposal Form

Please have the following information ready to complete this online form:

- Project Title
- Abstract (*250 words, text field, written for a non-expert reviewer*)
- Primary UC Water Initiative(s) addressed (*checkbox*): *Information, Institutions, Infrastructure*
- PI name, campus, home department
- Two page, NSF-style CV for lead investigator
- Verification of campus PI status (*yes/no*)
- Co-investigator information (*space for two co-investigators; not required*)
- Proposal description (*4 pages, 12-point font, PDF format*)
- Budget form (*2-tab Excel format*)
- Ability to attend the UC Water annual retreat on 9/21-22 at UC Davis (*yes/no*)

Requested information for the 4-page proposal description PDF listed above:

- Title and abstract (less than 250 words)
- A description of the work to be undertaken
- A description of the decision-making context this research will contribute to
- An assessment of the project's intellectual merit, innovation, and potential for broad-scale impact in helping achieve greater water security and sustainability
- Plans for requesting large-scale funding from government agencies, industries, or private foundations
- An outreach plan for project outcomes and a data management plan
- For Seed Grants, evidence of collaboration among UC researchers and of a multi-disciplinary approach
- Discussion of any cross-over application to other UC sustainability initiatives is welcomed, but is not necessary for consideration of funding

Step 2: Complete and upload the Budget Form

Complete the Budget Form (Excel) and upload at the end of this application form.

Step 3: Submissions will be acknowledged via email within one week.

Evaluation Criteria:

UC Water Challenge Grant Funding proposals will be evaluated by UC Water directors according to the following criteria:

1. The scientific and technical merits, novelty, and rigor of the proposal.
2. Contribution to the decision-making context. That is, the likelihood that the project will have a tangible and positive impact on water resources management, and that it will lead to significant societal or scientific results.
3. Evidence of cross-disciplinary collaboration among UC researchers for Seed Fund proposals is required.
4. Inclusion of pre-tenured faculty is encouraged but not required.
5. Inclusion of underrepresented faculty and students is encouraged but not required.