

Request for proposals for short-term, high impact project proposals

UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

The Dairy Innovation Hub, which launched in 2019, is a \$7.8 million per year investment by the State of Wisconsin to build a world-class talent pool and enable bold discoveries to ensure that Wisconsin's dairy community is at the global forefront in producing nutritious dairy products in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner.

The work of the Dairy Innovation Hub focuses on four priority areas (visit the [Hub website](#) for more information):

1. Steward Land and Water Resources
2. Enrich Human Health and Nutrition
3. Ensure Animal health and Welfare
4. Grow Farm Businesses and Communities

As plans for the Dairy Innovation Hub were finalized, the state's [Dairy Task Force 2.0](#) committee was completing their work. This committee [published recommendations](#) and example recommendations are also listed at the bottom of this document. Additionally, short-term, high-impact projects that will return immediate benefit to the dairy community or answer a pressing or emerging question are encouraged.

The objective of these short-term, high-impact research and outreach projects is to leverage existing UW-Madison expertise to provide timely outputs that address pressing issues, concerns, or needs in the Wisconsin dairy community. The nature of these projects can range from implementation, outreach, education, or applied research and projects should focus on providing tangible outcomes to end-users (e.g. farmers, cheesemakers, veterinarians, agronomist, etc.). Longer-term research proposals are better suited for DIH graduate student and post-doctoral RFPs.

Highlighted differences from first STHI RFP:

- Project timeline limited to 1 year
- Increased emphasis on implementation, outreach, and education projects
- Increased emphasis on justification that tangible outcomes can be achieved by the end of 1 year
- Selection of 1 top priority area (a secondary can be identified); Justification of fit to priority area(s)
- Review criteria listed in RFP
- New Hub PI status may be indicated

One-year proposals for \$10,000 to \$50,000 will be considered. Funding rate will be dependent on quality and range of proposals. Preference will be given to projects that can show high impact within 1 year.

Proposals must be submitted via WISPER. To be accepted, proposals must have all approvals (Chair/Administrator/Co-PIs) and include the full proposal as detailed below. The Short Title (WISPER) must be "UW Dairy Innovation Hub: Short-Term, High-Impact", document type "grant", and be routed to Casey Hillmer. Questions regarding the proposal should be directed to Maria Woldt, maria.woldt@wisc.edu.

Proposals are due by 5p.m. March 4, 2021 and decisions will be announced in early April 2021. Funds will be available for May 2021 start dates.

Application materials to be submitted (to be uploaded as 1 pdf file):

- Cover page and 250-word non-technical summary ([Excel tab "cover page"](#)).
 - The Short Title (WISPER) must be "UW Dairy Innovation Hub: Equipment"; also include a descriptive title on the cover page.
 - Include names of PI, co-PIs, and participating faculty/staff/students, and up to two Dairy Innovation Hub Priority area(s) the project addresses.
 - To qualify for "new Hub PI" status, PI cannot have received Hub funding prior to Jan 2021 (excludes faculty startup support and other pending RFPs). New Hub PI status is independent of career stage.
 - Indicate what [Task Force Recommendation](#) will be addressed providing the verbatim challenge noted in the document (link above) OR what emerging challenge/need. Include the objective of your project.
 - Include a 250-word non-technical summary of the proposed research. The non-technical summary should address the importance of the project, major objectives, the basic methods used to collect and produce data, and the ultimate goals, impacts, and tangible outcomes the project endeavors to achieve.
- A brief (3-page limit) proposal containing the following:
 - Describe how you intend to address the Task Force Recommendation or emerging question including pertinent methodology, resources, prior demonstrations of related or similar tasks (ex. websites, pictures, publications, apps, etc.).
 - List the current personnel available to work on the project and their relevant expertise in the area.
 - Provide the timeline of work completion. Note, these projects are limited to 1 year.
 - Identify the Hub priority area most relevant (a secondary priority area may also be identified) to the project. The proposal should include a justification of fit to priority area and how the outcomes of this project will contribute to progress in Wisconsin, relative to the priority area.

- Complete a budget form ([using the template](#)) and provide a budget justification including the salary (commiserate with planned effort level) and fringe (fixed at 16% for all personnel), supplies, travel, etc. requested. Given the short-term nature of these projects, strong preference is for use of current staff or students that can be partially or fully supported through these project grants.
- Outcomes, dissemination, relative fit to the current research program, and future research goals (1-page limit): Define the outcome, target audience, and how the outcome will be delivered to the audience. Include evidence of the PI's track record in generating and disseminating tangible outcomes to stakeholders, if applicable. Include a description of future research goals, other outcomes of the project, and potential for this work to lead to subsequent funding. In lieu of a current/pending funding, include a description of how this project fits with the PIs/co-PIs other efforts and funding. If a similar or complementary proposal has been funded or submitted, PIs should describe the unique contribution of this project.

Requirements and outcomes:

- The PI can be faculty OR staff in UW-Madison CALS. Staff members must have [Blanket PI status](#) or one-time, [Limited PI status](#) for this proposal, prior to submission of application¹.
- Additional team members can be outside of CALS.
- Projects should be able to generate a tangible product (publication, app, video, survey results, briefing paper, etc.) by the end of the proposed timeline (1 year maximum).

Proposal Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a group comprised of Hub steering committee members and ad-hoc reviewers.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Justification for fit to Dairy Innovation Hub Priority area (20%)
2. Short-term: Likelihood to generate tangible outputs to end users (30%)
3. High-Impact: Likelihood to have strong impact on Wisconsin dairy community (30%)
4. Leverages existing expertise (10%)
5. Meets "New Hub PI" criteria (10%)

Scores will not be provided back to PIs; however, synthesis feedback on proposal will be provided with decision letter.

If you have questions regarding appropriateness or fit of a proposed item to this RFP, please contact Heather White heather.white@wisc.edu.

Dairy Task Force 2.0 recommendations:

Several of the Task Force recommendations are tasks that we are well suited to address. A few examples include:

- Outreach to encourage young people to pursue ag careers (Recommendation #3)
- Further market understanding of value-added and specialty cheese in Wisconsin (Recommendation #45.1)
- Understand the impact of dairy and agriculture on local communities (Recommendation #5)
- Development of educational programming for non-farm audiences ranging from cow biology to land, water, and crop management (Recommendation #11)
- Creating an app for dairy producers and associates for timely messages on major topics (Recommendation #34)

¹ To request PI status, contact your department chair. Briefly, the process consists of submitting a completed request form co-signed by your department chair and an up-to-date CV to the CALS Research Division for Associate Dean Bill Barker's approval. Please email required documents to michell.sass@wisc.edu. Requests should be made by February 1, 2021 to ensure they are approved prior to the submission deadline.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can the project be something that can be done primarily or completely virtually or remotely?

A: Given the impact of COVID on in-person research, outreach, and education, projects that can be executed virtually or remotely will be fully considered. Emphasis will be placed on the tangible outcomes of the project within the one-year timeline.

Q: What expenses are allowable in the budget?

A: The annual budget can be used for salary (fringe to be included at 16%) research (lab, field, farm) supplies or consumables, undergraduate hourly expenses, travel to farm or research station, travel to conferences where research will be presented, publication fees, or technology or computing (hardware or software) needs that are specific to the project. Expenses should be justified within the budget justification.

Q: How will the funds be dispersed?

A: An account will be set up for use by the PI. Projects are limited to a one-year timeline and funds should be used within a year of allocation.

Q: Can I use this STHI project to fund a student already on my research team?

A: Yes, given the focus on one-year timelines and outcomes within the one-year period, the preference is to complete STHI projects with students or staff already a part of the research team. Key personnel should be identified within the proposal.

Q: Are there expectations that come with this funding?

A: As with all funding, there are reporting expectations. The Hub has to report financial and research outcomes on a fiscal year basis. Researchers will be asked to complete an online submission form twice per year. The form is brief and very similar to Hatch reporting to minimize administrative burden on the PI. You or a collaborator on the project may be asked to participate in the Dairy Summit which is anticipated to be an annual event (in Wisconsin) which will include opportunities to present research.

If you have remaining questions, please contact Maria Woldt (maria.woldt@wisc.edu) or Heather White (heather.white@wisc.edu).