



2020 Unsolicited Research Program Instructions for Submission of Pre-Proposals

The Unsolicited Research Program supports WRF in its mission by funding research projects that can be the catalyst for transforming our understanding of our water resources and our ability to protect and preserve them in a sustainable and cost effective manner and to minimize impact on public health and the environment. WRF seeks pioneering research pre-proposals that will significantly advance knowledge and understanding in protection and enhancement of water quality or the water environment and that could fundamentally transform how WRF subscribers perform their work. WRF also considers pre-proposals that would take existing research to the next level of completion, resulting in practical solutions to water quality problems. Those with likelihood to advance knowledge and understanding, and provide relevant information for WRF Subscribers are invited to submit full proposals.

Pre-proposal packages for the Unsolicited Research Program must be submitted electronically to WRF by 11:59pm ET, **March 30, 2020**. (Note: Submissions submitted after this date and time will be rejected)

Upon evaluation of the pre-proposals, a short list of proposers will be invited to submit full proposals for review and consideration. WRF will notify all proposers of the outcome of the selection process with regard to their pre-proposal submission.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Page Limits

The main body of the pre-proposal is **limited to three (3) pages** (excluding cover sheet and attachments) of single-spaced, 11-point font text with one-inch margins.

Specific page limits for all sections are provided below:

WRF Cover Sheet	1 page
Main body of pre-proposal	3 pages
Allowed attachment (resume of Principal Investigator)	2 pages
Allowed attachment (resumes of Key personnel)	2 pages each

b. Submittal Instructions

All pre-proposals must be submitted **via email** to Unsolicitedproposals@waterrf.org by 11:59 pm ET, **March 30, 2020**. The electronic package must include:

- A completed WRF Cover Sheet and the completed pre-proposal application in PDF.
Pre-proposal submissions are reviewed by WRF staff to ensure completeness.

2. GUIDELINES FOR PRE-PROPOSAL PREPARATION

a. WRF COVER SHEET

The completed Cover Sheet must include the following elements:

- **Proposer Information:** Include the name, title, organization, address, phone number, and email of the Principal Investigator (PI). This is the information that WRF will use to contact you regarding the status and evaluation of your pre-proposal.
- **Type of Organization:** The type of organization applying for funding (for the PI only).
- **Project Information**
Title – A concise title should be used to describe the project. It is recommended that no more than 65 characters and spaces be used.
- **Research Topic:** Provide relevant keywords to describe the project’s research topic.
WRF Funds Requested– The total cost to WRF (i.e., requested WRF funding necessary for project completion).
In-Kind/Other Contributions Amount – WRF requires a **25% match**. A minimum of 25 percent must be contributed by the applicant (i.e., the applicant’s minimum contribution must equal one-third of WRF funds requested). Acceptable forms of applicant contribution include cost-share, applicant in-kind or third-party in-kind. (list of cost-share and/or in-kind support and the entities that have committed funds is not included in the 3 page limit)
Total Project Budget – The Total Budget is the sum of the WRF cost and the in-kind match.

b. MAIN BODY

The main body of the pre-proposal cannot exceed three (3) pages. Tables, graphs and references essential to the presentation should be included in the 3-page limit. The pre-proposal must include the following sections and information:

- **Project Rationale, Originality and Technical Significance**
 - Statement of Importance: Concisely state why the proposed research is of importance and relevant to the mission of WRF.
 - State-of-Knowledge Supporting the Project: Summarize the current state-of-knowledge regarding the scientific and technological advances in the proposed area. Make a case for the originality and innovation of the proposed research.
 - Science/Technology Outcome Potential: Describe how the proposed research is cutting-edge/breakthrough work and/or could lead to fundamentally transformative results.
- **Project Objectives/Design**
Describe the specific objectives that will be addressed by the proposed research. Briefly outline the project approach, experimental design, and procedures to be used to achieve stated objectives.
- **Project Deliverables**
Identify the expected project deliverables, including the final product(s) that will be developed. Describe potential opportunities to communicate the results.
- References cited to support the pre-proposal must be provided within the 3-page limit. Do not attach a separate page of references if it exceeds the 3-page limit.

- **Qualification Statement**

- Provide names and background of the key individuals involved in the project. Include relevant research and other professional experience and demonstrated abilities.
- A two-page (maximum) resume may also be attached for the PI and any other key members of the proposed project team.

- **Timeline**

Indicate the proposed duration of the project.

- **Proposed Budget**

- Funds Requested: Indicate the total amount of funds requested from WRF, and describe how they will be used for the proposed work.
- Other Support: A minimum 25% of the total project value must be contributed to the project in the form of a cost-share and/or in-kind support or services. Provide a list of cost-share and/or in-kind support and the entities that have committed funds (or services) for this research. (not included in page limit)

Note: If the pre-proposal is invited for to develop a full proposal the research team will need to substantiate their indirect costs by providing the highest level available from the following descending four levels of agreements and statements in accordance with Federal cost principles:

- U.S. Federal government agency **approved** Indirect Cost Negotiation Agreement/Determination OR Audited Statement of Direct Labor, Fringe Benefits and General Overhead (for-profit entities are required to comply with 48 CFR 31.2)
 - Reviewed Statement of Direct Labor, Fringe Benefits and General Overhead in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services (SSARS) issued by the AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) (for-profit entities are required to comply with 48 CFR 31.2) c.
 - Compiled Statement of Direct Labor, Fringe Benefits and General Overhead in accordance with SSARS issued by the AICPA (for-profit entities are required to comply with 48 CFR 31.2)
 - Election to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs in accordance with 2 CFR 200.414
- **Proposal Evaluation:** Please see the “Criteria to Evaluate and Select Pre-Proposals” section of the 2020 Unsolicited Research Program’s Call for Pre-Proposals for more information on the evaluation criteria
- **Attachments**
 - The only attachments allowed in the pre-proposal phase are resumes of the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PIs, and key personnel (if any). Each resume cannot exceed two (2) pages. Resumes are not counted as part of the 3-page limit.

3. PROPOSER ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

If a contract is awarded as a result of this pre-proposal and the subsequent full proposal, the proposer's organization becomes a WRF contractor and assumes legal and financial accountability for the awarded funds and for performance of the supported activities. The proposer's organization is responsible for verifying the accuracy, validity, and conformity of information in the proposal.

4. WRF POLICIES AND CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

The proposer should review and agree to WRF policies and conditions. The project will be funded and conducted as a contract, not as a grant. Example of WRF's standard [Project Funding Agreement](#) available online.

Highlighted policies include the following:

- **Deliverables**

Interim and final deliverables are required. Frequency of reporting will depend on agreed-to milestones of the research being conducted or the demonstration being performed. WRF will establish a technical Project Advisory Committee to review, and provide comments on, all deliverables. Final deliverables must be provided following established WRF guidelines.

- **Copyright**

WRF requires assignment of copyright for the draft and final deliverables generated in connection with the research.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Please visit our website for answers to Frequently Asked Questions for pre-proposals under the 2020 Unsolicited Research Program.
- Questions relating to proposal submissions should be directed to Lola Olabode at lolabode@waterrf.org

WRF Unsolicited Research Program Pre-Proposal Checklist

INTERNAL TO WRF PURPOSES

WRF Pre-Proposal Tracking No: _____

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- Received by **March 30, 2020**.
Yes No
 - Pre-proposal contains **electronic** PDF of entire proposal.
Yes No
 - **WRF cover sheet** completed.
Yes No
 - **Main body** of proposal is limited to **3 pages** (excluding cover and attachments) AND contains the sections below:
Complies Does NOT comply Deviations _____

Main Body of Pre-Proposal must include the following sections:

- **Project Rationale, Originality, Technical Significance** included.
Yes No
- **Project Objectives/Design** included.
Yes No
- **Deliverables** included.
Yes No
- **Qualification Statement** included.
Yes No
- **Timeline** included.
Yes No
- **Proposed Budget** included.
Yes No
- **Attachments** included (ONLY attachments allowed are PI and key personnel resumes).
Yes No
Deviations _____
- Check **System for Award Management (SAM.gov)** exclusion list.
Done