



Date Posted: Friday, October 27, 2023

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Developing a Coordinated National Research Strategy for Water Reuse (RFP 5262)

Due Date: Proposals must be received by **3:00 pm Mountain Time on Dec 5, 2023**
WRF Project Contact: Miriam Hacker, mhacker@waterrf.org

Project Sponsors

This project is funded by The Water Research Foundation (WRF) as part of WRF's Emerging Opportunities Program.

Project Objectives

- Develop an integrated national strategy for communicating and prioritizing water reuse research that supports the needs of ongoing and planned reuse projects.
- Synthesize identified research needs from existing WRF reuse research and previously completed stakeholder engagements.
- Coordinate with key stakeholder groups to produce an accessible roadmap document for the water sector, including prioritized research needs across various water reuse applications and source water types.

Budget

Applicants may request up to \$75,000 in WRF funds for this project. In-kind support is encouraged, though not required.

Background and Project Rationale

In 2020, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the [National Water Reuse Action Plan \(WRAP\)](#) in collaboration with partners across the water sector. Actions in the plan are intended to drive progress on reuse and address local and national technical, institutional, and financial barriers. As part of the WRAP, The Water Research Foundation committed to complete Action 7.2: development of a coordinated national water reuse research strategy to best leverage water reuse research activities, avoid duplicative efforts, and support WRF subscriber reuse project operations and development across all regions of the United States. The outcomes of the Action item are envisioned to include a prioritized list of research needs across various water reuse applications and water sources,

focusing on engagement with a diverse set of utilities and partners interested in potential water reuse opportunities.

WRF staff originally designed this Action Item to align with existing efforts and research being done at the Foundation. Research needs have been solicited through recently published WRF projects on the topics of stormwater reuse, agricultural reuse, on-site water reuse, and water quality monitoring (e.g., Garvey et al. 2023, Thebo et al. Forthcoming, Hayek et al. 2022, Hanson et al. 2023). This approach capitalizes on the participation and guidance of WRF subscribers and researchers, including the 34 utility and manufacturer subscribers currently participating in reuse related WRF projects. To date, WRF staff have successfully engaged stakeholders through facilitated workshops at the annual WateReuse Symposium (e.g., 2020, 2022), producing an extensive list of specific water reuse project ideas. A total of 55 project ideas falling under implementation, treatment, and monitoring themes were proposed by stakeholders, along with 19 additional project recommendations. Some have already been proposed internally through the WRF Research Priority Program, such as “Approaches to Build Strong Partnerships and Solidify Successful Interagency Reuse Projects” (Bloxom 2023a) and “Regionalized and Integrated Solutions for Brine Management and Recovery” (Bloxom 2023b).

There is a near-term need to synthesize this extensive input (research needs taken from research projects, surveys, workshops) and create a prioritized research agenda for the next phase of water reuse project development and operations. This project will support incorporation of the gathered data, feedback, and initial work into an accessible roadmap deliverable that will prioritize future reuse research opportunities and completion of the WRAP Action Item 7.2.

Scope of Work

Task 1: Desk review of initial findings, including WateReuse Symposium Workshop results, survey findings, internal WRF planning documents, WRF reports on water reuse, and meetings with WRF staff.

Task 2: Propose a conceptual framework for water reuse research, including major themes and organization of source and application types. Recommended approach: theory of change model.

Task 3: Solicit feedback from WRF staff, subscribers, and stakeholders through meetings with WRF staff and the upcoming 2024 WateReuse Symposium Workshop.

Task 4: Populate the conceptual framework from Task 2 with specific feedback, project ideas, and stakeholder groups necessary for the reuse research strategy.

Task 5: Develop a final roadmap document synthesizing outcomes from prior tasks in an easily accessible format.

Task 6: Disseminate roadmap in collaboration with WRF Communications & Marketing team and WRF Research Services staff via Foundation partners and a WRF Webcast.

Project Schedule

WRF aims to complete the research roadmap document (Task 5) by September 31, 2024. Dissemination of the roadmap (Task 6) may continue throughout 2024–2025 at relevant sector events but will be supported primarily by WRF staff.

References and Resources

A summary of the EPA WRAP Action Item 7.2, including a report on the 2022 Workshop at the Water Reuse Symposium can be found here: www.epa.gov/waterreuse/national-water-reuse-action-plan-online-platform?action=7.2

The following list includes WRF research projects to be included as inputs for the research roadmap. This list is not exhaustive and other projects could be identified during completion of the scope of work.

- WRF Projects funded by the California State Water Board under Grant 2: www.waterrf.org/california-state-water-board-grant#swb-grant2
- Garvey, E., Rasmus, J., Brown, S., Fassman, E., and Stein, E. 2023. *Assessing the State of Knowledge and Research Needs for Stormwater Harvesting*. Project 4841. Denver, CO: The Water Research Foundation. www.waterrf.org/research/projects/assessing-state-knowledge-and-research-needs-stormwater-harvesting
- Thebo, A., Dery, J., and Cooley, H. Forthcoming. *Addressing Impediments and Incentives for Agricultural Reuse*. Project 4956. Denver, CO: The Water Research Foundation. Report not yet published, webcast available at www.waterrf.org/research/projects/addressing-impediments-and-incentives-agricultural-reuse
- Hayek, C., Lall, U., Becker, W., Kowles, P., and Faber, L. 2022. *Implementing Onsite and Distributed Water Reuse Systems in the United States: Literature Review*. Project 5040. Denver, CO: The Water Research Foundation. www.waterrf.org/research/projects/successful-implementation-decentralized-reuse-and-treatment-systems
- Hanson, B., Lechevallier, M., Rosario-Ortiz, F., Raseman, W., Stanford, B., Walker, T., and Becker, W. 2023. *Water Reuse and Beyond – Water Quality Monitoring Methods, Data, and Interpretation*. Project 5079. Denver, CO The Water Research Foundation. www.waterrf.org/research/projects/assessing-water-quality-monitoring-needs-tools-gaps-and-opportunities-potable
- Bloxom, L. 2023a. *Approaches to Build Strong Partnerships and Solidify Successful Interagency Reuse Projects*. RFP 5250. Denver, CO: The Water Research Foundation.
- Bloxom, L. 2023b. *Regionalized or Integrated Solutions for Brine Management and Recovery*. RFP 5256. Denver, CO: The Water Research Foundation

Evaluation Criteria

Competitive candidates will demonstrate experience and qualifications in the following areas and have the option to form teams to meet the criteria described here:

1. Understanding of the problem
2. Proposed approach for completion of the Tasks outlined in this RFQ
3. Qualifications of key personnel regarding the scope of work

Proposers selected for final consideration will be requested to provide evidence of past performance demonstrating success in executing similar scopes of work. Generally, this is evidenced through previous client assessments or appraisals of work provided to WRF by either the proposer or the proposer's previous clients.

Submission Requirements for Statement of Qualifications

Please include the following items in your response:

1. Proposal cover sheet:
www.waterrf.org/proposal-guidelines#RPP-proposal-coversheet
2. Letter of Interest detailing how the respondent(s) meets the above criteria. This should aim for three pages but not exceed five pages.
3. Resumes or CVs outlining the respondent's experience and any experience of key team members.
4. Proposed budget and concise budget narrative. No specific format is required, but it needs to include the following information:
 - a. Consultant's hourly rate and available capacity to support the project. For the rate provided, proposers must specify whether the hourly rate is unloaded (base direct labor) or loaded (inclusive of direct labor, fringe benefits, overhead, profit, etc.).
 - b. Estimated number of labor hours for completion of project scope.
 - c. Justification or narrative to explain costs beyond personnel time/labor.
5. Evidence of past performance demonstrating success in executing similar scopes of work. Examples include previous client assessments or appraisals of work provided to WRF by either the proposer or the proposer's previous clients.

Budget and Funding Information

The funding available from WRF for this project is \$75,000. Cost-share is not required for this project but is encouraged.

Application Procedure and Deadline

Proposals are accepted exclusively online in PDF format, and they must be fully submitted before 3:00 pm Mountain Time on Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

The online proposal system allows submission of documents until the date and time stated in this RFQ. Submit your proposal in one PDF file at: forms.waterrf.org/build/232955414892869.

Questions to clarify the intent of this Request for Qualifications and WRF's administrative, cost and financial requirements may be addressed to the Research Program Manager, Miriam Hacker, at (571) 384-2116 or by email at mhacker@waterrf.org.