EarthLab Innovation Grants Program
2021 Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Overview

EarthLab envisions an equitable, just and sustainable world where people and planet thrive.

The Innovation Grants Program is seeking proposals for research at the intersection of climate change and social justice that will generate equitable and actionable science and knowledge (i.e., science that is usable and used)**.**

Goals: co-creation and partnership between community and UW researchers, interdisciplinary collaboration, action at the intersection of climate and social justice, and potential for growth of the project or partnership.

Maximum funding request: $75,000 over 17 months.

Team composition: at least two University of Washington (UW) faculty or staff researchers from different disciplines (including one researcher with Principal Investigator status), at least one community or non-academic lead, and at least one undergraduate/graduate student or post-doc.

Allowable expenses: personnel, travel, services, and supplies following UW policies.

Project deliverables: required within grant period; designed to have immediate impact for community or non-academic partners.

Innovation Grant Cohort Meetings: each team must participate in 3 cohort meetings during the grant period.

Letter of Intent (due 1/27/2022, 5:00 pm PT): two pages max, submitted along with up to three single-page letters of support from community and non-academic project collaborators. Evaluated for invitation to go forward with a full proposal.

Full Proposal (due 3/22/2022, 5:00 pm PT): four pages max, including abstract, plan, deliverables, timeline and budget.

Final Report (due 9/25/2023, 5:00 pm, PT): two pages max.

EarthLab Overview

EarthLab envisions an equitable, just and sustainable world where people and planet thrive.

As a [Carnegie-classified Community Engagement University](#), the University of Washington (UW) aspires to be the top public university in the world as measured by impact. EarthLab is an institute at the UW that pushes boundaries to develop innovative, just and equitable solutions to environmental challenges, with a particular focus on climate and its intersection with social justice. We do this by connecting across sectors and academic disciplines to inspire and incentivize new partnerships that bridge the UW and the wider community.

Innovation Grants Program Description

The EarthLab Innovation Grants Program invests in teams of community partners and academic researchers and students at the University of Washington who are interested in developing solutions at the intersection of climate change and social justice. EarthLab is seeking proposals for research that will generate equitable and actionable science and knowledge (i.e., science that is usable and used).

Funding is intended to support partnerships that have or will co-define research priorities from multiple perspectives and initiate a new research project that addresses climate change. The project should co-create new knowledge that can be used by the community and other stakeholders to mitigate or adapt to climate change and address intersecting social justice considerations. Projects may be local, regional, national or international, and preference will be given for projects that are relevant to communities globally.

Examples of potential research areas include *but are not limited to*: the impacts of climate change on people, such as increased food insecurity, health and safety risks associated with extreme heat, and displacement due to sea level rise; the economic impacts of climate change; policy innovations that center community perspectives; and strategies to mitigate or adapt to climate change.

For questions about the program or this RFP, please contact elgrants@uw.edu

Timeline

Announcement of the Request for Proposals	September 14, 2021
Deadline for Letters of Intent	**January 27, 2022, 5:00 pm PT**
Notification of Invitation to Submit Full Proposal	February 11, 2022
Deadline for Full Proposals	**March 22, 2022, 5:00 pm PT**
Announcement of Awards	April 11, 2022
Award Period	April 25, 2022 – September 25, 2023 (17 months)
Final Report Deadline	September 25, 2023, 5:00 pm PT
Award Amounts	**Up to $75,000 per project**
Total Funding available for FY 2022-2023	$450,000

Anticipated Awards

There is $450,000 available for the current funding cycle. The maximum budget request per project is $75,000. *[Note: This amount was increased from $300,000 on 12.7.21.]*

Applicant Eligibility

Project teams must include:
1) **Community or Non-Academic Lead(s)**
   The community or non-academic lead(s) may include, for example: personnel associated with/from a Tribe, a community-led organization, a non-governmental organization, a city, state or federal agency or a business.

2) **University of Washington Lead(s)**
   Two or more UW faculty or staff researchers from **different disciplines**.

   At least one of the UW faculty or staff researchers must have Principal Investigator (PI) status with the UW. If the project team is awarded a grant,

this person will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and institutional requirements.

3) University of Washington undergraduate student(s), graduate student(s) or postdoc(s)

Each team should include at least one undergraduate or graduate student or a postdoc who is *meaningfully engaged* in at least one project activity (e.g., the student or postdoc should have opportunities for both leadership and professional development, as well as to receive mentorship).

Individuals and organizations **may not** serve as a project lead on more than one project team. Applicants with existing resources to fund their project or who need funding to continue an existing funded project are discouraged from applying. Grantees that have received funding from the EarthLab Innovation Grants Program in the past are not eligible to apply for the current funding cycle.

The Innovation Grants Program does **NOT** fund the following:
- Academic course development
- Program evaluation
- Technology commercialization

Proposal Requirements and Criteria

Projects should deliver on the Innovation Grant Program's desired outcomes and align with EarthLab's vision and mission (please see "EarthLab Overview " and "Innovation Grants Program Description" above).

The following questions will be used to evaluate each LOI and full proposal:
- To what extent does the proposal reflect issues at the intersection of climate change and social justice?
- Are the research questions and research aims clearly defined?
- Is there co-leadership from community or non-academic partners and researchers?
- Is there a novel mix of disciplines (e.g., art, ecology, policy, engineering and health)?
- Is there a plan for meaningful involvement of the student(s) or postdoc(s)
- Is there one or more clearly defined deliverable(s)? (see "Project Deliverables" for examples)

- Are there clearly stated goals for sustainability or growth of the partnership or project? (e.g., *Does the project have the potential to persist and grow? Is there a commitment to the partnership beyond the scope of this grant? Is there the potential to obtain external funding to sustain the work? Is it visible and understandable to various stakeholders? Is this relevant for multiple communities globally?*)

Allowable Expenses

Proposed expenses must be tied directly to the implementation of the project activities and may include personnel, travel, services, or supplies where appropriate. The University of Washington Principal Investigator will receive the funds as a budget transfer and no indirect costs will apply. Community or non-academic partners can receive reimbursement for approved costs and will be required to follow UW policies. Reimbursements can be processed through the Principal Investigator's department; however, EarthLab administrative and fiscal staff are available to provide support or answer questions.

Examples of allowable expenses include:
- Salary and benefits for grant-related effort
- UW student tuition (no more than ⅓ of the total budget should be tuition)
- Travel support for project teams and participants, per UW travel guidelines
- Seminar/conference registration
- Accessing technical capacity (e.g., data analysis, meeting facilitation)
- Support (e.g., facility, rental, food) - in accordance with UW and WA state policy - for convening workgroups or hosting community listening sessions or gatherings
- Printing

Examples of unallowable expenses include:
- Alcohol
- Goods and services for personal use
- Publication costs
- Patent costs

Any funds unspent at the end of the award period must be returned to EarthLab for future grant cycles.

Project Deliverables

Each project team should identify one or more primary deliverables that they seek to complete within the award period. EarthLab encourages each team to identify a deliverable that will be most useful to the community or non-academic partners and/or that has the potential to make an immediate impact.

Examples of deliverables include: a report or podcast to share your research findings; an interactive website where community members and researchers can interact with the data generated by the project; or community-workshops that involve community members in the research project and/or report out the results.

Additionally, **project teams are required to participate in three EarthLab Innovation Grant cohort meetings*** during the award period. The cohort meetings are an opportunity to network with and learn from other EarthLab grantees and to build skills in community-engaged and interdisciplinary research. EarthLab staff will be available at each cohort meeting for consultation on your project. The UW Principal Investigator and the Community or Non-Academic Lead are *required* to attend and provide a status update on the project and all project team members are *highly encouraged* to attend. Cohort meetings will be in-person when possible; otherwise, the meetings will be held via Zoom. The meetings will be scheduled in Spring 2022, Winter 2023 and Spring or Summer 2023.

*Additional financial support for travel and translation services will be available for the cohort meetings.

You may be asked to complete a short evaluation after each cohort meeting which will be used to make future cohort meetings more effective.

If your team is awarded a grant, EarthLab will share the following on our website: the project abstract, team member names and affiliations, the final deliverable(s), and any photos that you may choose to share.

EarthLab also wants to help your team share your story - our Communications and Engagement team is available to provide consultation on your deliverable, social media, advertising relevant lectures, talks or webinars, responding to media requests, and more. Your team may be invited to participate in EarthLab showcases or to present to other stakeholders. This helps EarthLab to generate additional interest and support for our programs.

Letter of Intent Submission Instructions

Letters of Intent should be submitted via Google Form - the link is available here and on the EarthLab Innovation Grants Program website.

Each applicant team will be asked to submit the following for each team member in a Google form:
- Name
- Email
- Organization, if applicable
- Academic department, if applicable
- Role in project: community or non-academic lead, UW lead, or undergraduate student, graduate student, or postdoc, or collaborator

Additionally, teams will be asked to indicate how much funding they intend to request for their project, up to $75,000.

1. The Letter of Intent should be no more than two pages (single-spaced and no less than 12-point font). Figures are included in the page limit, but references are not. It should be submitted as an attachment in the Google form. **In your Letter of Intent, please address the following:**
   a. What community need(s) will this project help to meet?
   b. What are the general research aims of the project? Please highlight the ways that your innovation grant project is at the intersection of climate change and social justice.
   c. Please describe the roles and responsibilities of each team member.
      i. What role will the community or non-academic lead(s) hold in the project?
      ii. What is the role and responsibilities of the UW research lead(s) in the project *and* what disciplinary strengths do they bring to the team?
      iii. What is the role and responsibilities of the UW student or postdoc *and* how will they be meaningfully involved in the project?
   d. What deliverable will your team generate as a result of the Innovation Grant funding?
   e. What are your long-term goals for your partnership and/or your research?

Up to three single-page Letters of Support (LOS) should be included from community or non-academic collaborators on the project. No more than three pages total of LOS will

be forwarded to the review committee. LOS can be submitted as an attachment in the Google form.

Letters of Intent should be submitted on or before January 27, 2022, 5:00 pm PT.

All LOIs will be reviewed by a committee of community or non-academic stakeholders and UW faculty from a variety of disciplines. **Applicants will be notified on or before February 11, 2022 if they are selected by the review committee to submit a full proposal.** Project teams that are selected to submit a full proposal will be asked to follow the full proposal submission instructions (below).

Full Proposal Submission Instructions

Teams that are encouraged to submit a full proposal should submit their proposal at the link provided to them on or before **March 22, 2022, 5:00 pm PT**.

Each team will be asked to submit the following for each team member in a Google form:
- Name
- Email
- Organization, if applicable
- Academic department, if applicable
- Role in project: community or non-academic lead, UW lead, or undergraduate student, graduate student, or postdoc, or collaborator

You will also be asked to designate two primary contacts (one community or non-academic lead and the UW researcher with PI status).

Full proposals should be a maximum of 4-pages in length. Proposals should be single-spaced and no less than 12-point font. Figures are included in the page limit, but references are not. The budget and budget narrative are submitted as part of the Google form and are not part of the 4-page limit. The full proposal should be submitted as an attachment in the Google form. The following are required elements of the proposal:

1. **Project Abstract**: A concise summary of your project which should be accessible to general audiences and which will be made publicly available if your project team is funded. *350-word limit*.

2. **Project Plan**: A description of the significance, goals, objectives, research design and methods, and activities of the project.
3. **Description of Deliverable(s)**: A description of your team's deliverable(s) and how you intend to disseminate your research results.
4. **Timeline**: A timeline that describes relevant project activities for the duration of the award period.
5. **Budget and Budget Narrative**: An itemized budget with justification for each anticipated expense. The budget and budget narrative are submitted as part of the Google form.

All Letters of Support that were not submitted with the LOI can be submitted as an attachment in the Google form. LOS should be no more than one-page each.

Full Proposal Review and Award Process

Proposals will be scored based on the criteria listed above under "Proposal Requirements and Criteria". The review committee will provide scores and written feedback and make funding recommendations to the Executive Director of EarthLab for final approval. Projects will be scored and ranked based on the proposal requirements and criteria on page 4.

Upon approval, the Grants Program Lead will email an award letter from the email address **elgrants@uw.edu** to the selected project teams no later than **April 11, 2022**.

Reporting Requirements

In funding innovative projects across new partnerships, we anticipate that there will be challenges. Teams should feel free to email elgrants@uw.edu at any time with questions or concerns.

Teams will be required to provide a short, verbal project update at each Innovation Grant cohort meeting.

Project teams will also be required to submit a final report to the Innovation Grants Program Lead. The final report should be **no longer than 2 pages**. The final progress report will be due on **September 25, 2023 at 5:00 pm PT** and should include the following:

- Description of challenges and successes, major activities, and significant achievements

- Description of deliverable
- Response to the following questions:
    - What did the EarthLab Innovation Grant allow you to accomplish that would have otherwise not been possible? What, if any, gap did this funding fill?
    - What aspects of the grant program should we focus on to improve the grant program for future cohorts?

Terms and Conditions

1. It is the UW PI's responsibility to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and institutional requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, policies for [Human Subjects](), [Animal Welfare](), [Export Controls](), Lobbying, FERPA and any other UW requirements. Use of hazardous materials will follow all UW and [Environmental Health and Safety]() (EH&S) policies and procedures. The UW PI is responsible for notifying or seeking approval from the appropriate compliance offices on the UW campus **prior** to initiating any work and following all relevant protocols. EarthLab expects that the team will not begin work on the project until all appropriate compliance procedures are completed.
2. Intellectual property will follow University of Washington [policy]().
3. If the project team is partnering with a Tribe, that team will be expected to determine and follow the appropriate Tribal IRB protocols.
4. If there is a proposed change or absence (60 days or greater) in PI, grantees will immediately provide justification to the Grants Program Lead via email at [elgrants@uw.edu]().
5. Grantees must follow University of Washington procurement practices.
6. Budget needs can change with unexpected research results. If the post-award budget revisions are greater than 20%, it will require review and written approval by EarthLab.
7. All expenses incurred and paid for within the project must be submitted on or before **September 25, 2023**. Any unspent funds need to be returned to EarthLab for future grant cycles.
8. Grantees are required to attend and participate in the Innovation Grant cohort meetings.
9. Grantees are required to participate in a pre-and-post program evaluation survey and may be asked to complete a short survey after each grantee meeting.
10. Publications, presentations, or other communications referencing the project funded by the Innovation Grants Program should include a statement that

acknowledges EarthLab. For Primary Support (greater than 50% support from EarthLab), please state that, "Funding for this project was provided by the EarthLab Innovation Grants Program at the University of Washington." For Partial Support (less than 50% support from EarthLab), please state that, "This project was supported in part by the EarthLab Innovation Grants Program at the University of Washington."

11. One person from each funded team may be asked to serve as a peer reviewer on the review committee for the year following their project's completion.
12. Project teams will be eligible to apply for a single, 3-month project extension only if there are extenuating circumstances that impact their ability to complete the project within 17 months.