

EarthLab Innovation Grants Program

Cohort 5 - 2024 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA SUMMARY

About

EarthLab is an institute at the UW College of the Environment taking equitable action on climate change. We do this in four ways:

1. We create new connections between people across UW and the wider community
2. We invest in research co-created with community
3. We build capacity for more environmental research and training
4. We mentor and train the next generation of climate leaders

The **Innovation Grants Program** invests in collaborations that span academic disciplines, engage multiple sectors and center community questions at the intersection of climate change and social justice. Teams interested in participating in the **Innovation Grant Cohort 5** must include community members in addition to University of Washington researchers and students.

The **maximum funding request** is \$80,000 over 18 months.

Requirements

Team Composition: At least two University of Washington (UW) faculty, postdoc, 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 UW undergraduate or graduate student.

Project Deliverable: Required within the grant period and will be useful to the community partner. Format is flexible.

Blog Post: Your student or community partner will be required to write a brief blog (no more than 800 words) about this experience, specifically geared towards the general public, that will help explain your team's contributions to the community and what next steps, if any, will take place going forward.

Innovation Grant Cohort 5 Meetings: Each team must participate in three cohort meetings during the grant period. The cohort model encourages collaboration, networking, and intends to contribute to building a community of practice around interdisciplinary and community-led research.

Important Dates

Letter of Intent (due 1/9/2024, 5:00 pm PST): Must be submitted via Google Form by the deadline. Evaluated for invitation to submit a full proposal.

Full Proposal (due 2/27/2024, 5:00 pm PST): Must be submitted via Google Form by the deadline along with up to three single-page letters of support from community and non-academic project collaborators.

Awards Announced: Week of March 25, 2024.

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

Contents

RFA Summary	1
About	1
Requirements	1
Important Dates	1
Full RFA	3
EarthLab Overview	3
Innovation Grants Program Description	3
Anticipated Awards	3
Timeline	4
Applicant Eligibility	4
Allowable Expenses	5
Application Instructions and Selection Criteria	5
Letter of Intent Instructions	5
Full Proposal Instructions	6
Review and Award Process	8
Letters of Intent	8
Full Proposals	8
Awardee Expectations	8
Project Deliverables	8
Communication and Engagement	8
Innovation Grant Cohort Meetings	9
Reporting Requirements	9
Terms and Conditions	9

FULL RFA

EarthLab Overview

EarthLab is an institute at the UW College of the Environment taking equitable action on climate change. We do this in four ways:

1. We create new connections between people across UW and the wider community
2. We invest in research co-created with community
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Innovation Grants Program Description

The **Innovation Grants Program** invests in collaborations that span academic disciplines, engage multiple sectors and center community questions at the intersection of climate change and social justice.

The **Innovation Grants Cohort teams** must be composed of researchers and student(s) from the University of Washington and community or non-academic partner(s). Teams should co-produce actionable science and knowledge centered around community-driven questions that can be used by the community and other stakeholders to mitigate or adapt to climate change and to address intersecting social justice considerations.

Innovation Grant projects may be local, regional, national or international.

Examples of potential focus areas include, *but are not limited to*:

- The impacts of climate change on health, such as increased food insecurity, extreme heat, air quality, and water issues.
- The economic impacts of climate change, such as displacement, loss of livelihoods.
- Policy innovations that center community perspectives.
- Strategies to mitigate or adapt to climate change.
- Creating communities of practice and networks.

The Innovation Grants Program does **NOT** fund the following:

- Academic course development.
- Program evaluation.
- Technology commercialization.

The **cohort model** encourages collaboration, networking, and intends to contribute to building a community of practice around interdisciplinary and community-led research.

Anticipated Awards

There is \$400,000 available for the current funding cycle. The maximum budget request per project is \$80,000.

Timeline

Table 1. Timeline of 2024 Innovation Grant - Cohort 5 application period.

STAGE	DATE
RFA announcement	September 18, 2023
Letters of Intent due	January 9, 2024, by 5:00 pm PST
Invitation to submit full proposal	January 30, 2024
Full Proposals due	February 27, 2024, by 5:00 pm PST
Award announcement	Week of March 25, 2024
Award period	March 25, 2024 – September 25, 2025 (18 months)
Mid-year report due	December 16, 2024
Final report due	30 days after completion of the award period

Applicant Eligibility

Project teams must include at a minimum:

1. Community or Non-Academic Lead

At least one community or non-academic lead **is required**. This 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)

At least two UW faculty, postdoc or staff researchers from different disciplines **is required**.

One researcher 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 or Graduate Student

At least one undergraduate or graduate student **is required**. The student should be meaningfully engaged in at least one project activity (e.g., the student should have opportunities for both leadership and professional development, as well as to receive mentorship).

Individuals and organizations **may not** serve as a principal investigator or community or non-academic lead on more than one project team within a single application cycle. Applicants with existing resources to fund their project or who need funding to continue an existing funded project are discouraged from applying.

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.

Examples of allowable expenses include:

- Salary and benefits for grant-related effort.
- UW student tuition (no more than $\frac{1}{3}$ (one third) 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.

Application Instructions and Selection Criteria

Letters of Intent and Full Proposals will be submitted to EarthLab via Google Form. A review by the Office of Sponsored Programs is not required for this grant application as these are internal UW funds from EarthLab. **Submissions that do not follow the application instructions will be disqualified.**

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" on page 3 of this document).

LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

Letters of Intent should be submitted via Google Form - the link is available at

<https://forms.gle/R4z35MGKKEauhyCs7> and on the [EarthLab website](#).

The following are required elements of the letter of intent. Applicants will be prompted to

respond to each of the following questions in the Google Form:

1. Project title.
2. Amount of funding requested, up to \$80,000.
3. Team Composition- Submit the following for each team member in the Google Form:
 - Name and title.
 - Email.
 - Organization name, if applicable.
 - Academic college and department, if applicable.
 - Role in project: community or non-academic lead, UW lead, undergraduate or graduate student, or collaborator. You will be asked to designate two primary contacts (one community or non-academic lead and the UW researcher with PI status). The name of the student does not need to be identified at the LOI stage.
 - Discipline or area of expertise.
4. Please describe your Innovation Grant project research aims or goals and to what extent this project addresses a community priority at the intersection of climate change and social justice. *(400 words) (Up to 10 points)*
5. Please describe how your research proposal or project is innovative in helping the community adapt to or mitigate climate change. *(300 words) (Up to 5 points)*
6. Please describe how the team meets the applicant eligibility requirements on Page 4. How is the team interdisciplinary and community engaged? What are the disciplinary strengths of the UW researcher and to what extent is there a novel mix of disciplines (e.g., art, ecology, policy, engineering and health)? Describe how there is co-leadership with the community or non-academic lead(s). How will the UW student(s) be meaningfully involved in the project? *(400 words) (Up to 5 points)*
7. Please describe the big picture deliverables your team will generate for the community and their identified needs/priorities as a result of the Innovation Grant funding (see “Project Deliverables” on page 8 of this document for examples). *(200 words) (Up to 5 points)*
8. Does your project include partnership with a tribe? (Yes/No)
 - If yes, please describe how your team has engaged with tribal leadership. What is your plan to request Tribal Council approval? What will your team do if Tribal Council approval is not provided? *(250 words) (No points awarded for this question)*

FULL PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Teams that are encouraged to submit a full proposal should submit their proposal via Google Form at the link provided to them. Full proposal project narratives should be a maximum of 3-pages in length. Project narrative submission must be single-spaced and no less than 12-point font using standard 1” margins. Do not use footnotes. Figures are included in the page limits. Up to one additional page of references may be submitted with the project narrative.

The following are required elements of the full proposal. Applicants will be prompted to

respond to each of the following questions in the Google Form:

1. Project title.
2. Amount of funding requested, up to \$80,000.
3. Any changes to team composition from LOI. For new team members, submit the following in the Google Form:
 - Name and title.
 - Email.
 - Organization name, if applicable.
 - Academic college and department, if applicable.
 - Role in project: community or non-academic lead, UW lead, or undergraduate student, graduate student, or collaborator. You will be asked to designate two primary contacts (one community or non-academic lead and the UW researcher with PI status). The name of the student does not need to be identified at the full proposal stage.
 - Discipline or area of expertise.
4. **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 words) *(No points awarded for this question)*
5. **Project Narrative: 3-pages**
 - **Project Plan:** An expanded description of the research design and methods and/or grant activities and goals of the project to achieve the impact identified in the LOI. *(Up to 10 points)*
 - **Roles and Responsibilities:** A detailed description of how each member of the team will contribute to the project. *(Up to 5 points)*
 - **Deliverable(s):** A more specific description of your team's deliverable(s) and how the team intends to disseminate the project results to the community. Include details regarding how your team will allocate resources to achieve this and how you will engage community partners and community during this process. (See "Project Deliverables" on page 8 of this document for examples) *(Up to 5 points)*
 - **Goals for Sustainability:** Please describe the team's long-term goals for your partnership and/or your research - how will you maintain or grow the partnership or project. *(Up to 5 points)*
6. **Attachments:**
 - **Budget/Budget Narrative and Timeline:** Templates will be provided. An itemized budget with justification for each anticipated expense. A match is not required, but may be included in the budget form. Timeline describes relevant project activities for the duration of the award period. Are the project goals or research aims realistic given the resources, capacity of the team, and timeline? How will the project financially support the team members and communities attached to this project? *(Up to 5 points)*

- **Letters of Support.** Up to three Letters of Support (LOS) from community or non-academic collaborators on the project are encouraged. Each letter of support (LOS) from community or non-academic collaborators should be no longer than one page. Up to 3 pages of LOS can be uploaded as an attachment in the Google Form. No more than three pages total of LOS will be forwarded to the review committee.

Review and Award Process

LETTERS OF INTENT (LOI)

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 January 30, 2024 if they are selected by the review committee to submit a full proposal.**

FULL PROPOSALS

The review committee will provide scores and written feedback and make funding recommendations to the EarthLab Executive Director and the Innovation Grants Program Team for final approval.

Upon approval, the Innovation Grants Program Lead will email an award letter from the email address elgrants@uw.edu to the selected project teams no later than **the week of March 25, 2024.**

Awardee Expectations

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Each project team must identify one or more primary deliverable(s) to be completed within the award period. EarthLab requires each team to identify a deliverable(s) that will be useful to the community partner. Findings of research and project outcomes must be actively disseminated to the communities and stakeholders involved; the form and methodology in which dissemination occurs must be identified by the community and stakeholders involved.

Examples of deliverables may include (but are not limited to): a report or podcast to share your research findings; a multimedia exhibit; an interactive website where community members and researchers can engage with the data generated by the project; participatory workshops that involve community members in the research project and/or report out the results; or printed materials distributed to the community.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

For awarded grantees, EarthLab will share the following on our website and social media channels: the project title and abstract, team member names, affiliations and photos, a quote from the team about how this grant will positively impact their work, and the final deliverable(s).

Throughout the grant cycle, the EarthLab Communications and Engagement team is available to help your team share your story. More specifically, they can provide consultation on your deliverable(s), leverage EarthLab's social media following to help promote your work, advertise relevant lectures, talks or webinars, respond to media requests, and more.

Upon completion of the grant cycle, your student or community partner will be required to write a brief blog (no more than 800 words) about this experience, specifically geared towards the general public, that will help explain your team's contributions to the community and what next steps, if any, will take place going forward. This will be published on the EarthLab website and

across social media channels. If capacity is limited, this can also take the format of an interview written by the EarthLab staff. Additionally, your team may be invited to participate in EarthLab showcases or to present to other stakeholders.

INNOVATION GRANT COHORT MEETINGS

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 2024, Winter 2024 and Spring or Summer 2025. Translation services will be available upon request. You may be asked to complete a short evaluation after each cohort meeting which will be used to make future cohort meetings more effective.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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 brief mid-year report and final report to the Innovation Grants Program Lead. This is separate from the project deliverable. The mid-year report will be due by December 16, 2024, and the final progress report will be due 30 days after the completion of the award period. A mid-year and final report template will be provided to teams.

Teams should feel free to email elgrants@uw.edu at any time with questions or concerns.

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](#), [Environmental Health and Safety](#), Lobbying, FERPA and any other UW requirements. 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 and a plan to transition management of the grant to the new PI and (if applicable) new UW department 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% between categories, this 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, 2025**. Any unspent funds need to be returned to EarthLab for future grant cycles.
8. Grantees are required to attend and participate in the three Innovation Grant cohort meetings.
9. Grantees are required to submit a mid-year report by December 16, 2024 and a final report 30 days after the completion of the award period.
10. Grantees are required to submit a brief blog about the Innovation Grant project to be published on the EarthLab website and across social media channels.
11. Grantees are required to produce at least one deliverable to be completed within the award period. Findings of research and project outcomes must be actively disseminated to the communities and stakeholders involved
12. 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."
13. 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 18 months.
14. 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.