

# Agricultural Climate Resiliency Competitive Grants Program

## FY2025 Request for Proposals

### INTRODUCTION

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In response to proactive efforts via the plant coalition and allied agriculture industry partners in Michigan, the State of Michigan appropriated funds in Fiscal Year 2025 for an Agricultural Climate Resiliency Competitive Grants Program. This program, a partnership among Michigan agriculture industry partners, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension will fund three-year, integrated multi-disciplinary projects with the overall goal to enhance climate change adaptation and mitigation, and environmental sustainability of Michigan agriculture through regenerative agriculture and other approaches. Michigan agriculture must be better prepared and better equipped to be part of the solution to address climate change mitigation, adaptation, and environmental sustainability overall. Increasing resiliency is critical to ensuring availability of nutritious food and plants for Michiganders and a growing world population.

All proposals must outline multi-disciplinary approaches to address questions relevant to overall program goals and must ultimately be applicable at the on-farm level. Studies must include a significant extension/outreach and field-based component to ensure work remains grounded in industry relevance and ultimately application of information on farm. Funding for competitive grants to meet these goals is available during the 2025 Fiscal Year. Funded proposals should lead to significant future funding for continuation of work and plans for leveraging such funds must be articulated in successful proposals.

FAQs on the Agricultural Climate Resiliency Competitive Grants Program are available [here](#).

### ELIGIBILITY

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Principal Investigators (PIs) must be employed by Michigan State University (MSU). Co-PIs may be MSU employees, scientists from other Michigan academic institutions, or from the private sector, as needed to include important, relevant disciplines and expertise on project teams. USDA-ARS scientists appointed as adjunct faculty at MSU are eligible to serve as Co-PIs.

Individuals may submit no more than one proposal as PI. There is no limit to the number of proposals for co-PIs, and PIs are encouraged to construct multi-disciplinary teams. It is expected that co-PIs will have a major role in the project. Collaborators should not be identified in the proposal.

### TIMELINE FOR FY2025 PROJECTS

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| • <b>September 30, 2024</b>                            | Request for Proposals       |
| • <b>October 15, 2024</b>                              | Webinar (details to follow) |
| • <del>October 28, 2024</del> <b>November 11, 2024</b> | Letter of Intent due        |
| • <b>December 9, 2024</b>                              | Proposals due               |
| • <b>February 21, 2025</b>                             | Notification of awards      |
| • <b>April 1, 2025</b>                                 | Project funds available     |
| • <b>March 31, 2026, and 2027</b>                      | Annual progress reports due |
| • <b>September 1, 2028</b>                             | Final reports due           |

### PROGRAM PRIORITIES

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The goals of the Agricultural Climate Resiliency Program are aligned with the principles of soil health and regenerative agriculture, and the impacts of climate change. Specific goals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Enhancing soil and plant health.

- Enhancing soil carbon sequestration.
- Efficient use of water.
- Protection of water resources.

All proposals must clearly state how the proposed activities will preserve and enhance the diverse plant agriculture industries in Michigan in a time of rapidly changing climate. Broad relevance of proposed studies to multiple commodities produced in Michigan is required. A list of Michigan’s plant industry representatives and their commodity responsibilities can be found [here](#).

**FUNDING SCOPE**

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Proposals may request funding for up to three years total with year one funding for site establishment and baseline data collection. Multi-year funding is contingent on satisfactory progress. PIs will be required to submit annual progress reports and a final termination report. Presentations to the Plant Coalition and industry stakeholders will be a component of the annual and final report process.

Maximum funding for each grant is \$275,000 for year one and \$500,000 per year for years two and three. All three years will be funded from the Fiscal Year 2025 appropriation.

**PROPOSAL REVIEW**

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All proposals are subjected to scientific review and ranking by a panel composed of current and emeritus MSU employees, MDARD employees and industry professionals. Panel members are selected by Agricultural Climate Resiliency Program leadership. The identity of panel members is confidential. Proposal PIs and co-PIs will not be eligible to serve on the review panel.

Reviewers will review the submitted proposal documents, including up to three external letters of support from industry stakeholders per proposal.

To be eligible for funding, proposals must be integrated and multi-disciplinary, with a major field-based component. An extension/outreach component is required.

The chair of the review panel will report the recommendations of the panel to the Directors’ Action Team (DAT). The DAT consists of the Directors of MSU AgBioResearch, MSU Extension, and MDARD. The DAT will review the panel recommendations and make final decisions on funded proposals and appropriate allocations. The following criteria will be used by the review panel.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
Alignment with specific programmatic goals of the Agricultural Climate Resiliency Program (Required: integrated, multi-disciplinary, field-based component, extension/outreach component).	25
Scientific soundness; appropriateness of methodology; feasibility of completion.	25
Potential impact on Michigan plant agriculture (Required: broad relevance to multiple commodities). Letters of support from stakeholders.	15
Potential for external competitive funding	15
Mechanism to deliver information to Michigan plant agriculture industries.	10
Team composition and investigator qualifications aligned with project objectives.	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## **GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES**

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Proposals must include the cover page, must be single-spaced with indented paragraphs, double-spaced between sections, in 12-point type with 1-inch margins and no more than 8 pages long (sections II – VI). The page limit will be enforced. Required templates can be found at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/climate-resiliency/rfp>.

## **PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

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**I. COVER PAGE (TEMPLATE ATTACHED)**

Sections II – VI should be no more than 8 pages total.

**II. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

**III. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES**

**IV. SPECIFIC METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

**V. PROPOSAL IMPACTS**

Project must demonstrate potential impacts on Michigan's plant agriculture. The proposal must outline how impact will be measured. Outreach and economic rationale must be included as well.

**VI. PROJECT SCOPE**

Describe how this project builds on or supports any similar projects submitted to or funded by other sources.

**VII. BUDGET PAGE (TEMPLATE ATTACHED)**

Multi-year projects must include budgets for all proposed years. You must provide separate budget justification document.

**VIII. LITERATURE CITED**

Literature that supports goals, objectives, and methods of proposal.

**IX. TIMELINE AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A one-page detailed timeline with target dates must be included for year one (initiation year) along with years two and three. This timeline should include a management plan describing the specific role of each team member in completing the proposed objectives.

**X. TEAM QUALIFICATIONS**

One-page vita for the PI and each Co-PI outlining his/her qualifications and accomplishments.

**XI. LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Up to three letters of support may be submitted. Letters of support should not be sent directly to the AgBioResearch office. They must be uploaded in the competitive database as part of your proposal upload. Letters of support must address your project specifically.

**XII. FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER RESOURCES (OPTIONAL)**

Up to one page description of additional resources that will be available to the project, should it be funded. For example, facilities, including access to land provided by stakeholder partners for field research, specialized equipment, or personnel. Only those resources that are directly applicable to the proposed project should be listed. Quantifiable financial information should **not** be included here or in any other parts of the proposal. Reviewers will use this information to assess the capability of resources available to complete the proposed work.

**XIII. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESUBMITTED PROPOSALS**

Resubmitted proposals should include a one-page summary of how the research team has addressed the previous concerns of the review panel. This one-page summary is in addition to the eight-page limit of the proposal.