

Doug and Maria Bayer New Initiatives Fund for Sustainable Agriculture

2025 Request for Proposals

Introduction

As a result of a generous endowment from Doug and Maria Bayer to Michigan State University (MSU), the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) is able to provide seed funding to support collaborative research projects in sustainable agriculture and food systems. More specifically, projects funded with this 2025 seed funding are intended to initiate research in sustainable agriculture by bringing faculty together from MSU and other institutions to plan and coordinate grants from the largest institutions that fund agricultural research, federal and state agencies, and large national foundations, thus leveraging seed funding into major external grant opportunities. In this round of funding, those whose proposals directly support graduate students affected by project notifications that lead to a pause, or stop work, or termination are encouraged to apply.

Areas Targeted for Funding

Proposed projects should directly and strongly support new discoveries and practical applications in sustainable agriculture and food systems. Possible focus areas include projects that support food security, promote sustainability, and/or minimize environmental degradation with changing climate.

Eligibility

Tenure-stream or fixed-term faculty who have an affiliation with CANR and hold a position of Assistant Professor or higher at MSU are eligible to apply as lead Principal Investigator (PI). Employment status is not restricted for other team members from MSU and other institutions.

Program Funding and Budgetary Information

Projects may be proposed for a one to two-year duration with a maximum project budget of \$50,000 total. Funding may be proposed to cover project-related costs. ***PI salaries, subawards, and indirect costs are not allowable under this program.*** Professional services/contracts/consultants are allowable, if necessary.

In 2025, one project will be funded through this RFP with funding provided by the Doug and Maria Bayer New Initiatives Fund for Sustainable Agriculture. One additional project may be funded through this competition with funding provided from CANR.

Timeline

- May 9, 2025 Request for proposals released
- June 27, 2025 Proposals due by 5:00 PM
- August 15, 2025 Notification of awards
- September 1, 2025 Funding available (initiation of projects)
- August 31, 2026 Termination date for one-year projects
- August 31, 2027 Termination date for two-year projects

The annual RFP process will be coordinated through AgBioResearch on behalf of CANR. A panel of faculty reviewers (inclusive of the AgBioResearch Associate Director, Dr. Kang Xia) will be responsible for selecting the proposals to be invited to present the proposed projects to the panel before the final award decision is made.

Progress reports will be required as a condition of funding with details being outlined in award notices. All funds are to be spent by termination date.

Proposal Structure and Submission Guidelines

Proposals must be submitted to Ani Biswas (biswasa2@msu.edu) by 5:00PM on June 27, 2025. **Additionally, a Proposal Development (PD) document must be routed through the MSU Research Administration/Kuali Research (KR) system.**

All proposals should be submitted using Arial 11 pt. font, single spaced, 0.5-inch margins, with double spacing between paragraphs. Proposal content must adhere to length limitations as described below. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in the proposal being rejected without review. Proposals should be submitted in a single PDF document and contain the following components:

- 1) Cover Page – 1 page (Please use template cover page on page 3 of RFP)
- 2) Problem Statement and Need for the Project (limited to 300 words)
- 3) Goals and Objectives of Project
- 4) Summary of Methodology
- 5) Anticipated Results and Impacts
- 6) Project Timeline
- 7) Proposed Funding Agencies, including program titles for the targeted external grant opportunities and timeline for seeking the proposed funding
- 8) Budget – (Please use template on page 4 of RFP)
- 9) Budget Justification – (Please use template on page 5 of RFP)
- 10) Description of Team Qualifications (limited to 250 words) and a 2-page CV from each Team Member
- 11) Literature Cited

***Note – Items 2-7 cannot exceed four pages in length.**