



College of  
**Agricultural & Life Sciences**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**Wisconsin Consortium for Organic Research and Education  
Call for Research Proposals**

**Deadlines: Letters of intent due April 15, 2020**

**Proposals due June 1, 2020**

The Wisconsin Consortium for Organic Research and Education (WisCORE) invites University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) faculty and scientists with permanent principal investigator status to submit research project proposals addressing organic agriculture production and practices.

WisCORE is interested in fostering interdisciplinary research focused across a wide range of fields that contribute to organic agriculture. At the [Harvest of Ideas](#) convening on the UW campus in fall of 2018, academics, farmers, and other stakeholders identified needs and opportunities in organic research, education and outreach. Important research themes include long-term organic systems studies, organic plant breeding, organic animal nutrition and welfare, soil health and nutrient cycling, sustainability of organic systems (economic, social, environmental), organic transition strategies, and impacts of organic agriculture on human health and rural communities.

Through the generosity of private donations coupled with CALS resources, WisCORE intends to support up to five graduate students per year conducting sponsored research and supporting organic agriculture related education starting in fall 2021. Grants will provide support primarily for graduate assistantships, including fringe benefits and tuition remission. Supported students will be expected to work as teaching assistants for at least one semester of their support from this program.

Investigators are expected to leverage support from this program, leading to development of proposals that build on and continue the supported realms of research. Funds will be provided for one to four years, with preference for two year proposals. Grant administration and full proposal submission will follow CALS Research Division procedures and forms used for Hatch grants: (see <https://waes.cals.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2019/06/FY21RFP.pdf> for guidelines).

Letters of intent will be reviewed by UW faculty and organic practitioners. Successful applicants will be notified by April 30, 2020 and invited to submit full proposals through WISPER. Full proposal review will follow the Hatch process, with proposal evaluation by UW faculty, staff, and external stakeholders.

This special call for research proposals has three goals: (a) to foster system-level research initiatives that build upon and expand the scope of traditional, discipline-based research; (b) to create a cohort of graduate students allied in their pursuit of new knowledge about organic agriculture, along with their advisors and academic departments; and (c) to generate outcomes (e.g., linkages, preliminary data, etc.) that will strengthen future grant proposals for extramural funding.

**WisCORE**

Wisconsin Consortium for Organic Research and Education  
1630 Linden Dr., Madison WI 53706

## **Criteria**

Successful proposals will provide a clear vision for:

- Impact on organic production, processing, and/or products;
- Sustainability of organic agriculture in social, economic, and environmental dimensions;
- Intent to publish in peer-reviewed agriculture, sustainability, or systems journals;
- Outreach plan and connection with the organic industry;
- A plan for additional funding through extramural grants;
- The role of a graduate student, with opportunities for interdisciplinary training.

Reviewers will be asked to rate and comment on the proposal in these areas:

- Alignment of project goals with intent of this initiative, including the vision elements above;
- Evaluation of the scientific significance of the objectives;
- The soundness of the proposed methods and the likelihood of successfully conducting the research;
- Evaluation of the potential for addressing organic agriculture issues within the state of Wisconsin and the broader applicability of the research;
- Evaluation of the research team's ability to accomplish the stated objectives, and the match between these objectives and available resources;
- Feasibility of the PI's proposal for obtaining future extramural funding.

## **Letters of intent should include:**

- Names, contact information and departmental affiliations of PI, co-PIs and collaborators;
- Project title;
- Brief research project description including need/justification, objectives/hypotheses, research design and methods, project management plan, and research team qualifications;
- Total budget, not to exceed \$46,000/year for one to four years, including graduate assistantship support and when you anticipate supporting the student as a TA;
- Format: 1,000 total word count maximum, saved as a PDF.

Please email your letter of intent by 4:30 pm on April 15, 2020 to Steve Ventura at [sventura@wisc.edu](mailto:sventura@wisc.edu). If you have questions, you can reach Steve by email or at 608-262-6416.

Applicants will be contacted by April 30 regarding full proposal submission. Instructions on use of Hatch forms and submission requirements will be provided.

## **Timeline:**

April 15, 2020 – Letters of intent

April 30, 2020 – Notification about LOI

May 30, 2020 – Full proposals due

July 15, 2020 – Notification about proposals

Winter 2020/Spring 2021 – Recruitment of graduate students

Summer/Fall 2021 – Projects commence