



United States Department of Agriculture



OREGON

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service



OR Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Misty Beals/ Adam Rickard | 4/6/2023

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Agenda



1. Provide background of the program
2. Discuss Eligibility; who can apply, participants, required match funds
3. Application Categories and what is in the application packet
4. Provide guidance on how to develop your budget
5. Evaluation Process
6. What makes a successful and not so successful proposal



Proposal Due Date



**Applicants must submit their applications
via Grants.gov by 8:59 pm PST **May 8,**
2023.**



CIG Background



- CIG was re-authorized the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018.
- CIG is a voluntary program
- Projects may be farm-based, multi-county, small watershed or statewide in scope
- CIG does not fund research, with the exception of on-farm conservation research



CIIG Background



On-farm conservation research is defined as an investigation conducted to answer a specified conservation-related question using a statistically valid design, while employing farm-scale equipment on farm fields. Specifically, a valid study design will use an appropriate number of replications and statistical analysis of results.



Applicant Eligibility



To be eligible to participate in CIG an applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Be considered one of the following:
 - A federally recognized Indian Tribe
 - A state or local government
 - A nongovernmental organization
 - An individual
2. Be located in one of the following areas: the 50 States, Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands), or the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marina Islands). Projects must be located in Oregon.



Applicant Eligibility



To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve producers who meet the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) eligibility requirements. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

Eligibility information:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip>



Project Eligibility



Proposed innovative projects or activities must encompass:

- The development and assessment, evaluation, and implementation of either conservation adoption approaches or incentive systems, including market-based systems;
- Promising conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, or activities



Project Eligibility



The innovative project or activity must:

- Have been studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for success.
- Demonstrate, evaluate, and verify environmental effectiveness, utility, affordability and usability in the field.
- Adapt conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, approaches, or incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption.
- Introduce conservation systems, approaches, or procedures from another geographic area or agricultural sector to another.



Matching Funds



Selected applicants may receive CIG grants for up to 50 percent of the total project cost - federal contribution not to exceed \$100,000.

CIG recipients must match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions.

Only 25% of the total project cost may be contributed as in-kind.



Cost Sharing or Matching



<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/section-200.306>

(b) For all Federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the non-Federal entity's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) Are verifiable from the non-Federal entity's records;**
- (2) Are not included as contributions for any other Federal award;**
- (3) Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives;**
- (4) Are allowable under [subpart E of this part](#);**
- (5) Are not paid by the Federal Government under another Federal award, except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs;**
- (6) Are provided for in the approved budget when required by the Federal awarding agency; and**
- (7) Conform to other provisions of this part, as applicable.**



Cost Sharing or Matching



(d) Values for non-Federal entity contributions of services and property must be established in accordance with the cost principles in subpart E of this part

§ 200.402 Composition of costs.

Total cost. The total cost of a Federal award is the sum of the allowable direct and allocable indirect costs less any applicable credits.

§ 200.403 Factors affecting **allowability of costs.**

§ 200.404 **Reasonable costs.**

§ 200.405 **Allocable costs.**



Matching Funds



Projects may be between one and three years in duration, and participants should plan their projects based on an estimated project start date of September 1, 2023.

The maximum award amount for a single award in 2023 is \$100,000.



Payments to Participants

EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments

The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 imposes a \$450,000 program limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract between fiscal years 2019 and 2023.



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Questions?

Proposal Submission



Application forms can be obtained at:

www.grants.gov OR

Oregon NRCS Website:

<https://cig.sc.egov.usda.gov/applicants>



Proposal Submission



- Application Package Checklist
- SF 424a Application Cover Sheet
- DUNS number and SAM Registration
- SF424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs
- Executive summary (2 pages max.)
- Project description (7 pages max.)
- Detail budget narrative (4 pages max.)
- Declaration of beginning farmer or rancher
- Declaration of EQIP eligible producers





SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance

[View Burden Statement](#)

OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 12/31/2022

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:

- ☐ Preapplication
☒ Application
☐ Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:

- ☒ New
☐ Continuation
☐ Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

* Other (Specify):

* 3. Date Received:

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:



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SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance

* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

Natural Resources Conservation Service

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

10.912

CFDA Title:

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

USDA-NRCS-OR-CIG-23-NOFO0001255

* Title:

Conservation Innovation Grants Oregon Program

13. Competition Identification Number:



Proposal Submission



State Resource Concern Categories:

- Energy
- Air Quality and Atmospheric Change
- Water Quality
- Water Quantity
- Plant Health/Vigor
- Soil Quality
- Wildlife Habitat/Livestock



Proposal Submission – project narrative

- Project Background
- Project Objectives
- Project Methods
- Location and Size of Project or Project Area
- EQIP Eligible Participants
- Project Action Plan and Timeline
- Project Management
- Project Deliverables/Products
- Benefits and Transferability
- Project Evaluation
- Environmental and Social Impacts



Proposal Submission

Assessment of Environmental Impacts

Will implementation of the proposal have physical, chemical or biological impacts on the environment? If so, describe in general terms what they will be and how extensive they will be.

The description of the potential environmental impacts must address beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action. The length of the description should be commensurate with the complexity of the project proposed and natural environmental resources impacted directly, indirectly, or cumulatively. Where possible, information on environmental impacts should be quantified, such as number of acres of wetlands impacted, amount of carbon sequestration estimated, etc. Natural environmental resources include soil, water, air, plants, and animals, as well as other resources protected by law, regulation, Executive Order, and agency policy.



Proposal Submission

Environmental Compliance

Note #1: Please be aware that proposals for projects with potentially adverse impacts to natural resources may need to be modified in order to achieve acceptable and beneficial levels of environmental impact. NRCS may choose not to select projects that cannot be modified.

Note #2: Please be aware that applicants must permit NHPA Section 106 review and consultation by NRCS State or Area Office with required consulting parties (such as the pertinent SHPO and federally recognized Tribes) prior to the implementation of conservation practices and/or activities for their potential to affect cultural resources

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Proposal Submission

Natural Resources and Historic Property Review Requirements

The Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 and the NRCS regulation that implements NEPA at 7 CFR part 650 require that an environmental review be prepared for Federal actions that may have environmental effects. NRCS financial assistance under the CIG program requires compliance with these regulations. As part of the application packet, applicants are required to provide environmental information pertaining to their project if there will be actions with potential to affect the environment to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. **If the application is selected for funding**, the NRCS Program Contact, Technical Contact and NRCS Environmental Liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. **The selected applicant will be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document** (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement if required for NEPA compliance). Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

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Proposal Submission

Natural Resources and Historic Property Review Requirements (Continued)

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800), and other related authorities, require federal agencies to determine if a project has the potential to cause an effect to historic properties and, if yes, if they are adverse and how the effects may be addressed. This **NHPA review and compliance in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 must be completed by NRCS** and may not be delegated. This compliance process includes consultation with SHPOs, Tribes, THPOs, NHOs, and the appropriate preservation community regarding identification, evaluation of NRHP eligibility, evaluation of effects, and **if the effects are adverse**, treatment. This **treatment may include avoidance or other forms of mitigation of adverse effects**. This **mitigation will occur after the grant is awarded but before it is implemented**.

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Proposal Submission



Budget Information



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Budget Narrative Guidance

All costs must comply with the cost principles of 2 CFR Part 200, [Subpart E – Cost Principles](#). All costs (both Federal and any required non-Federal cost-sharing/match) that are part of an award must be:

- allowable ([2 CFR 200.403](#)),
- allocable to the agreement ([2 CFR 200.405](#)), and
- reasonable in amount ([2 CFR 200.404](#)).

A thorough budget narrative will aid the administrative review and processing of a recommended award. Amounts included in a budget and budget narrative are estimates; in the event of an award, payments will be based on actual expenditures. The following is guidance for your use in preparing a thorough budget narrative. The guidance follows the order of the budget items.

COST-SHARING/MATCHING: If required, you must provide the information below for the Federal portion of costs and *separately* provide the information below with the same level of detail for the cost-sharing/matching portion, as applicable, as part of the budget narrative.



Budget Narrative Guidance Cont.

- **Personnel**
- **Fringe Benefits**
- **Travel**
- **Equipment**
- **Supplies**
- **Contractual**
- **Construction**
- **Other**
- **Indirect**
- **Calculation**
- **Limitation**
- **Unrecovered Indirect Cost for Cost-sharing/Match**
- **Voluntarily Reduce/Waive**



Unauthorized Costs



Patents and Inventions:

- Regulation provides that small businesses and commercial organizations normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support.
- USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal Government use, reserves the right to require the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must normally manufacture it domestically.



2 CFR 200.420-200.476: Selected Items of Cost

- <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E/subject-group-ECFRed1f39f9b3d4e72>

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR SELECTED ITEMS OF COST

§ 200.420 Considerations for selected items of cost.

This section provides principles to be applied in establishing the allowability of certain items involved in determining cost, in addition to the requirements of Subtitle II of this subpart. These principles apply whether or not a particular item of cost is properly treated as direct cost or indirect (F&A) cost. Failure to mention a particular item of cost is not intended to imply that it is either allowable or unallowable; rather, determination as to allowability in each case should be based on the treatment provided for similar or related items of cost, and based on the principles described in §§ 200.402 through 200.411. In case of a discrepancy between the provisions of a specific Federal award and the provisions below, the Federal award governs. Criteria outlined in § 200.403 must be applied in determining allowability. See also § 200.102.

2 CFR 200.420- 200.476: Selected Items of Cost

General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost

- §
200.420 Considerations for selected items of cost.
 - §
200.421 Advertising and public relations.
 - §
200.422 Advisory councils.
 - §
200.423 Alcoholic beverages.
 - §
200.424 Alumni/ae activities.
 - §
200.425 Audit services.
 - §
200.426 Bad debts.
-

Proposal Submission



Declaration of Previous CIG Involvement

Identify any National or State CIG's you have had or currently have been awarded



Proposal Submission

- ✓ Application must be submitted by 8:59pm (PST) on Friday May 8, 2023.
- ✓ Must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov
- ✓ Applications submitted via facsimile, email, or by post will not be accepted



The background features a series of concentric circles in shades of light blue and white, creating a tunnel-like effect. A white, wavy line curves across the lower right portion of the image.

Questions?

Review Process



Priority Considerations:

- Studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for success;
- Demonstrates, tests, evaluates, and verifies environmental (soil, water, air, plants, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability in the field;
- Improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduces technology from another geographic area or agricultural sector;



Review Process



Proposal Evaluation Process

Eligible applications will be evaluated on a 3-tiered review process:

Basin/local Review – local adaptation and integration to NRCS conservation implementation strategies

Technical Review – technical feasibility and application of the innovation

Executive Review – integration and value to NRCS Oregon's strategic approach



Review Process



Transferability

- Potential for NRCS Oregon to successfully use the innovative approach or methods. (technical standards, technical notes, guide sheets, handbooks, software, etc.)
- Potential for producers and land managers to use the innovative technology or methods
- Potential to transfer the approach or technology to other parts of Oregon.



Successful Applications

To view projects funded by CIG go to NRCS Oregon Website:

https://cig.sc.egov.usda.gov/?utm_source=nrcs-cig&utm_medium=site&utm_campaign=obv-redirect
[tp://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/programs/?cid=nrcs142p2_04408](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/programs/?cid=nrcs142p2_04408)

- ✓ Inventory technologies/innovations
- ✓ Design methods
- ✓ Market based approach (eco-markets)
- ✓ Interim Conservation Practice/enhancement
- ✓ Assessment or Management tools



Unsuccessful Applications

- ✓ Solely a research projects
- ✓ Does not involve EQIP eligible producers
- ✓ Technology is adopted through EQIP
- ✓ 50/50 or applicants cash match not met
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Infrastructure for new or established business
- ✓ Land acquisition
- ✓ Proposal already funded under the National CIG
- ✓ Incorporation of seed varieties
- ✓ Demonstration projects on lands owned by a federal agency



For additional information, please contact:

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Questions?



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