



United States Department of Agriculture

Delivering Results for Agriculture and Conservation



Conservation Innovation Grants



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What is Innovation in a CIG Context?

- Originally meant to be a bridge between research and wide-scale adoption.
- On-farm demonstrations and field tests
- Developing and demonstrating approaches and technologies based on successful research and testing.
- On-farm research added in 2014, but only in-field, applied conservation research.



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How can innovation be used in EQIP?

- **Transfer of an approach/technology from a proven ag sector or geography to a new one.**
- **Demonstration of a new technology that has shown promise in controlled settings.**
- **Demonstration of a new approach for financing private lands conservation.**
- **Demonstration of a new approach for incentivizing producer adoption of conservation practices and systems.**



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What do we try to avoid in CIG?

- Traditional outreach and education projects
- On-farm conservation activities that are funded through EQIP
- Projects with no field-based or demonstration component
- Funding the same partner twice for the same idea
- Funding projects that are intended to lead to commercially available tools or products (i.e., bias toward tools and products available to producers for free)



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CIG “Classic” - Typical CIG since 2004 ✓

- **Funds the development of promising approaches and technologies—which may or may not be successful!**
- **Funding rarely provided directly to producers**
- **Projects often include small-scale pilots or demonstrations**
- **National and State competitions; WA prefers to keep money in EQIP fund pools.**



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CIG “On-Farm Trials” new 2019

- Funds the implementation and evaluation of innovative approaches, systems and practices that we know provide a conservation benefit.
- Funding must be provided directly to producers to offset implementation risk.
- Partners must complete both conservation and economic evaluations.
- Soil Health Demo Trial awardees must agree to use consistent assessment methods.
- National competition only.



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OFT—State Support



- **Area staff review and provide recommendations.**
- **State technical review to recommend project.**
- **NRCS responsible for CIG grant awardee's NEPA activities, HEL/Wetlands and AGI checks**



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2020 CIG Timeline



Activity	Estimated Date
2020 On-Farm Trails funding announcement released.	By March 1, 2020
CIG National Awardee Orientation meeting	By March 3,4, 2020 (in D.C.)
2020 national CIG Classic funding announcement released	By April 1, 2020
CIG Manual Updated	By June 1, 2020
CIG Manual Updated	By June 1, 2020



Number of Proposals Received and Grants Awarded

