

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE

On Behalf of The
Invasive Species Council of California

Invasive Species Grants
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Release date: <INSERT DATE>

Grant Proposals Due Date: <INSERT DATE>

Late grant proposals will not be accepted

www.iscc.ca.gov

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About the Program

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), on behalf of the Invasive Species Council of California, is pleased to announce funding for the Invasive Species Grant Program. The purpose of this grant program is to support organizations' goals to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts caused by invasive species that have been or are likely to be detected in California. Funded projects may include, but are not limited to, management actions for preventing introduction of invasive species, control, containment or eradication of an invasive species, and outreach, education, and research related to invasive species.

Background

Invasive species threaten the economic and environmental vitality of California. California is a diversity hotspot – its Mediterranean climate and varied topography provide a stunning array of ecosystems from the coast to the mountains, in cities and on farms, rivers and estuaries, and throughout the valleys and deserts. California's diverse ecosystems are home to 650 bird species, 220 mammals, 100 reptiles, 75 amphibians, 70 freshwater fish, 100 marine fish and mammals, and 6,500 taxa of native plants. Additionally, California's \$51 billion in agricultural production includes more than 400 commodities and produces approximately 50% of the specialty fruits, vegetables, and nut crops for the United States of America. This unique biodiversity across ecosystems is threatened by emerging and re-emerging invasive species, including land-dwelling and aquatic organisms, that impart a severe environmental and economic impact in the state. Collectively, invasive species are recognized as a major threat to biodiversity and resilience to a changing climate.

Grant Priorities

Priority shall be given to projects that minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts caused by invasive species and restore and protect biodiversity and ecosystem health. In addition, priority shall be given to projects that are consistent with state priorities. Examples of documented priorities include those defined in the [Invasive Species Council of California's Strategic Framework](#), the regional efforts in [Appendix F](#) of the [Pathways to 30 x 30 in California](#), the [California State Forest Action Plan](#), California State Parks' [A New Vision for California State Parks](#) and park-specific general and management plans, the [Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee Restoration Subcommittee Draft Work Plan](#), [The Delta Plan](#), the [California Water Plan](#), or the [California State Wildlife Action Plan \(please note, hyperlinks are provided to give examples and are subject to change\)](#). Priority will also be given to projects that advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and that leverage funding through cost-sharing with collaborators.

Funding, Timeline, and Reporting Requirements

A total of <insert amount> million is available in this grant cycle. Funds for the current Request for Proposal (RFP) come from a one-time allocation from Proposition 4 (2024). The maximum funding is \$650,000 per project, with a term not to exceed two years. No minimum is set for funding requests. CDFA reserves the right to offer an award different than the amount

requested. Funding may supplement, but not supplant, existing activities/programs. Supplement is defined as adding to existing funds to enhance or expand existing activities. Supplant is defined as replacing existing funds for an ongoing activity, or funding an already funded activity. Match funding is not required, but will count as extra points toward your score.

Projects can start as early <insert date>, with final reports due no later than <insert date>. Reporting requirements include semi-annual reports in years 1 and 2, an annual report at the end of year 1, and a final report due no later than <insert date>. The principal investigator or other key personnel will make a public summary presentation during the last year of the project or the year after the project is completed. The presentation will provide information about project goals, objectives, and results.

Project and Applicant Eligibility

- Projects must directly benefit California.
- Applicants from public or private colleges and universities, federal, state, and local government entities including, Tribal entities, special districts, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply.
- Project lead and lead entities must be based in California. Additional collaborators, investigators, and/or subcontractors may be out of state.
- The project lead(s) and/or collaborators must have access to a quarantine facility if the project involves biological control or testing products on species that are not yet established in California.
- It is the grantees responsibility to secure any and all necessary federal and state permits necessary to implement their project.

How to Submit a Grant Proposal

An online workshop will be held <INSERT DATE and TIME> to answer questions about the grant opportunity and the grant submissions process. The workshop will be recorded and available to watch through the deadline for submission of applications.

Grant proposals must be submitted via the [Amplifund application portal](#) no later than the grant submission deadline <<insert date>> at 5 pm pacific time. Applicants must first create an account through Amplifund, login, and fill out all required sections of the online application form. Completed budget templates and appendices (e.g., CVs, letters of support) must be uploaded and submitted through the portal as well.

CDFA cannot assist in the preparation of grant proposals; however, general questions may be submitted to david.pegos@cdfa.ca.gov and Jonathan.babineau@cdfa.ca.gov. In order to ensure that all potential applicants benefit from all submitted questions and answers, all questions and responses will be posted on the [ISCC webpage](#). To ensure a response from CDFA, all questions must be submitted according to the timeline provided on the website.

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/...>

Proposal Review and Evaluation

A review committee consisting of California Invasive Species Advisory Committee members will review the proposals and evaluate their merits. Any member of the committee who is connected to a submitted project will be excluded from any discussions or decisions regarding that project. The evaluation criteria are found at the end of this document.

Disqualifications

The following will result in the disqualification of a grant proposal:

- Incomplete grant proposals, including grant proposals with one or more unanswered questions and/or missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments
- Grant proposals requesting more than the maximum award amount
- Grants proposals requesting funds outside of the grant term
- Grant proposals with unallowable costs or activities necessary to complete the project objectives
- Grants with out-of-state project leads

APPEAL RIGHTS: Any discretionary action taken by the <Office Name> may be appealed to the CDFA's Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notice of disqualification from CDFA. Email notification shall serve as the date of service. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application or their authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 or emailed to CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov. If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be disqualified from consideration.

Award Notification

All applicants will be notified regarding the status of their proposal by <insert date>. Applicant's whose projects are not funded may request comments from <insert contact name and email> within 30 business days of transmittal of the funding denial.

Grant Proposal Contents

A. COVER PAGE

- 1. Project Title**
Provide a unique and concise title for the proposed project that describes the project.
- 2. Project Summary (not to exceed 1,000 words)**
Concisely describe the need for the project, approach to be taken to address it, and expected outcomes.
- 3. Project Type**
Prevention, containment/control, eradication, outreach, education, research, other (describe)
- 4. Target Species**
Identify the invasive species (one or more) to be addressed by the project
- 5. Geographic Scope**
- 6. Grant Funding Amount Requested**
- 7. Proposed Start and End Dates**
- 8. Applicant Organization:** Legal name of the organization that will serve as lead for the project and will receive and oversee the use of grant funds.
- 9. Organization Type:** Using the drop-down menu, select the organization type that best describes the applicant.
- 10. California Senate and Assembly Districts:** Using the drop-down menus, select the districts where the applicant and project are located. More than one district can be selected, if needed. If the project covers all of California, select "Statewide." If the program/project is outside of California, choose "00".
- 11. Taxpayer Identification Number:** Enter the applicants 9-digit taxpayer identification number in the format ##-#####.
- 12. Authorized Representative and Secondary Contact:** Please enter contact information for the individual who is authorized to execute a funding agreement and receive grant funds, as well as a backup if that individual should be unreachable.
- 13. Submitting Organization:** Legal name of the organization submitting the proposal on behalf of the applicant, if other than the applicant.

B. PROJECT NARRATIVE

The narrative must address each section below. This content will be the basis for the review and scoring of each proposal as outlined in the Evaluation section. The Project Narrative should not exceed 12 pages (single-spaced), excluding figures, tables, and references. Supporting documents should be added to the end of the Project Narrative and will not count towards the page limit.

1. Background and Justification

- 1.1. Need and Beneficiaries:** Describe the problem, and how the proposed project will minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts caused by invasive

species. Identify beneficiaries, such as communities, resources, biodiversity, agriculture, water quality, climate adaptation, carbon sequestration, industries, and sectors, etc. that will benefit from this project.

- 1.2. Alignment with Priorities: Identify and describe how the proposed project contributes to documented priorities relevant to the State (see examples above). Reference documents, identify specific actions in those documents, and tie them to the proposed project.

2. Project Objectives

- 2.1. Objectives and the questions to be addressed: Define the objectives, how each objective contributes to meeting the defined need and beneficiaries, and how each objective will be met.

3. Tasks and Methods

- 3.1. Tasks and subtasks: For each objective, define and describe each task and subtask that will be implemented, and explain how they contribute to that objective.
- 3.2. Methods: Define and describe the methods that will be used to accomplish each task and/or subtask.
- 3.3. Timeline. Describe when each task and subtask will be completed. Include interim deadlines and work products, and when data and reports will be shared with CDFA.
- 3.4. Data Management Plan: Include a data management plan, if applicable, that addresses data collection, quality control, the electronic repository for the data, how it will be backed up and archived, and its availability to the public.

4. Deliverables, Expected Outcomes and Benefits

- 4.1. Define and describe what products, benefits, or intellectual advances will result from the project. Characterize as appropriate for the type of project being implemented.
- 4.2. Describe how this project benefits the following:
 - Protects biodiversity, ecosystem health and/or human health;
 - Advances justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion;
 - Leverages funding through cost-sharing with collaborations.

5. Success Criteria

Define and describe how implementation of the project will be assessed quantitatively or qualitatively. Detail what measures will be used to evaluate project outcomes, and how they will be assessed and reported to CDFA.

C. PROJECT TEAM

1. Project Leader(s).

Specify each project leader's name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, email address, and project role. A two-page curriculum vitae including relevant publications as appropriate, and a list of current and pending funding must be included for each project leader.

2. Project Collaborator(s).

Specify each collaborator's name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. Any cooperating Federal or State agencies, institutions, organizations, or private partners providing funding or in-kind support should be included here. A letter from each collaborator must be included. Describe their role in the project, estimated time commitment, and a statement of agreement to participate in the project.

3. Supporter(s) (Optional).

Specify organizations and/or individuals that support the ideas and objectives of the project but are not providing funding. A letter from each supporter must be uploaded as a pdf.

D. BUDGET

The project budget must be summarized in a table and detailed in a narrative by budget category (1-9, below). The budget narrative, supported by the budget table, is the basis for the review and scoring of each proposal as outlined in the Evaluation section. Budgets should only include allowable costs as defined [here](#). Unallowable costs will not be reimbursed. The budget table and narrative should identify external funding and its contributions to the overall project. Assume a start date of **<insert date>**.

The budget table will be completed within Amplifund, and the following table is provided for reference. For each budget category provide the amount of grant funds requested (rounded to the nearest whole dollar) broken into years 1 and 2, as well as the non-grant funds that will go toward the project. In the narrative section provide a brief text descriptions of the costs/activities covered for each category (excluding Category 8, Indirect Costs). An Excel version of the budget table can be found on the ISCC webpage: **<INSERT LINK>**

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | (9) Non-Grant Funding | Total |
|--|--------|--------|-----------------------|-------|
| | | | | |

| BUDGET CATEGORY | | | | |
|---|----|----|--|---------|
| (1) Salary and Wages | | | | |
| Employee 1 | | | | |
| Employee 2 | | | | |
| (2) Fringe Benefits | | | | |
| (3) Travel | | | | |
| (4) Equipment (items \$5,000 or >) | | | | |
| (5) Supplies | | | | |
| (6) Contractual | | | | |
| (7) Other Direct Costs | | | | |
| (8) Indirect Costs | | | | |
| (10) Total Expense Budget Cost (Grant funds requested) | Y1 | Y2 | | Y1 + Y2 |

For each budget category populate the table and briefly detail the following in the narrative:

1. Salary and Wages - Estimate the total cost of salary and wages for time spent on the project by individuals employed by the applicant organization. In the budget table description column list the title of each employee and the approximate time spent on the project (number of hours or percent full time equivalent).
2. Fringe Benefits - Estimate the total cost of fringe benefits for time spent on the project by individuals employed by the applicant organization in accordance with the applicant organization's established fringe benefits policy. In the description column, list the approximate fringe benefit rate and types of benefits included in the applicant organization's established fringe benefits policy.
3. Travel - Estimate the total cost of project related travel for all individuals except contractual personnel. In the description column, describe how the travel will be necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project. In accordance with [California Assembly Bill 1887](#), state funded and state sponsored travel to states with discriminatory laws is prohibited. **Grant funds cannot be used to support costs for travel to states with active discriminatory laws.** For the most up-to-date list of prohibited states, please visit <https://oag.ca.gov/ab1887>.
4. Equipment - Estimate the total cost to purchase any equipment necessary to achieve project objectives. Equipment is nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000 to be used exclusively for the project.
5. Supplies - Estimate the total cost to purchase supplies necessary to achieve project objectives. Supplies are items with an acquisition cost less than \$5,000 per unit that are

used exclusively for the objectives of the project. In the description column, list the types of supplies to be purchased. General use office supplies (paper, printer ink, pens, etc.), facilities costs (telephone, internet, etc.), and administrative costs are considered indirect and should not be included under category E. Supplies.

6. Contractual - Estimate the total cost of work on the project that will be performed by individuals/organizations other than the applicant (e.g., consultants, contractors, partner organizations, etc.). This amount should include all associated salary and wages, fringe benefits, travel, scientific research equipment, supplies, other, and indirect costs. In the description column, list the services to be provided and the contractors that will work on the project and be paid with grant funds.
7. Other - Estimate the total cost of all other project related expenses. Expenses typically listed under category G. Other include registration fees to attend professional conferences, speaker/trainer fees, stipends, fees to publish in academic journals, fees for data collection and lab analysis, meeting space or equipment rentals, subscriptions, etc. In the description column, list the specific types of expenses necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project.
8. Indirect Costs - Indirect costs are facilities and administrative costs that cannot easily be tied directly to the activities of the grant. Examples of common indirect costs include administrative/clerical services, rent, utilities, internet and telephone service, maintenance, and general office supplies. It is generally unallowable to charge an indirect cost as a direct cost. Indirect costs must be treated in accordance with your organization's policies and procedures. In the absence of a policy, applicant's indirect costs must not exceed ten percent. Any non-UC applicants requesting an indirect rate of over 10% will need to provide their Established Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. UC applicants should use the negotiated rate currently at <insert current rate>.
9. Total Expense Budget - Total of grant funds requested will automatically be calculated using the amounts requested for categories 1 through 9. This total cannot be greater than \$650,000. Please ensure that the total matches the award requested amount listed on the Project Information section.

Not included in the Total Expense Budget, but also captured in the budget table and narratives, explain any additional funding that will support the proposed project. Additional funding (also termed "cost share" or "match" is not required for this grant.)

10. Non-Grant Funds - The amount of non-grant funded costs (cost share and other funding sources) committed to the project from other sources, if applicable. Cost sharing is not required for this grant.
 - 10.1. Cost Share - Provide the name of the organization, the name and contact (telephone number and email address) of primary contact of the organization, the source of the funds and the amount(s) of funds and/or in-kind services they have committed.

- 10.2. Other Funding Sources - Indicate any Federal, State, or other grant program(s) providing funding for this project, as well as any partner providing cash funding or in-kind contributions toward the completion of the project. Provide examples of other sources of funding applicable to the proposed project.
- 10.3. Non-duplication of funding. If this proposal includes cost share or other funding, explain how the requested grant funds will not duplicate work funded by alternate sources.

E. PDF FILES TO UPLOAD

- 1. Project Leader(s) Resume(s).** Include a two-page resume, including a list of relevant publications. Also include a description of relevant research/outreach activities; provide information on all current and pending projects, whether or not there is a specific time commitment and how it will impact the proposed project. Files should be uploaded as a single PDF file named as "Leader_LastName_FirstName.pdf".
- 2. Collaborator's Statement of Commitment.** Include a letter from each collaborator describing their role in the project and statement of agreement to participate in the project. Files should be uploaded as separate PDF files named as "Collaborator_LastName_FirstName.pdf".
- 3. Letters of Support.** Include a letter from each supporter explaining the rationale for their support. Scanned copies of letters are acceptable. Files should be uploaded as separate PDF file named as "SupporterInstitution_SupporterLastName_SupporterFirstName.pdf".

Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be evaluated based on the criteria detailed below.

| EVALUATION CRITERIA | Max points |
|---|------------|
| Project Merit | 40 |
| <p>Justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Need and Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The defined problem poses an actual or imminent significant threat to California's economy, environment, or human health. - The defined problem poses an actual or imminent threat across a large geographic scale (regional/statewide level). - Proposed project indicates potential contribution to long-term problem resolution. - For research proposals, new information to be generated is a logical next step based on the previously conducted related research or efforts described in the proposal. • <u>Alignment with Priorities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing the defined problem aligns with the goals of the grant. - Proposed project will benefit California across multiple sectors (agriculture, environmental, human health). - Proposed project aligns with documented state priorities (department, agency, governor's). | 15 |
| <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed objectives effectively address the stated problem. • The proposed objectives align with grant goals. • The proposed objectives align with state priorities. | 10 |
| <p>Tasks and Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed tasks and methods are appropriate to fulfill the objectives. | 15 |
| Project Team and Resources | 30 |
| <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders + collaborators: The project leaders have complementary and integrated expertise, and their leadership approach/governance and organizational structure is appropriate for the project. • The project proposal has strong support from relevant organizations/individuals. | 20 |

| EVALUATION CRITERIA | Max points |
|---|-------------------|
| <i>Resources</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organizational and institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to the project leaders are adequate for the project proposed. The project will benefit from the unique features of the scientific, cultural, environment, and/or collaborative arrangements. | 10 |
| Feasibility | 30 |
| <i>Implementation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project objectives are achievable within the proposed timeline. The overall strategy, work and analysis methodology are well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the objectives of the project. Potential problems, alternative strategies and benchmarks for success are included. Data will be managed and shared in a reasonable timely manner per CDFA guidelines. Measures to evaluate the project are sound. | 15 |
| <i>Budget Justification</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project objectives are achievable within the proposed budget. The proposed budget is clear, reasonable, and justified and all budget tables are included. If the project includes collaborators (optional), the proposed budget reflects efforts across collaborators and distribution of funding among collaborators is commensurate with their efforts. If there is a cost share (optional), the proposed budget explains how resources are shared across entities. | 15 |
| Total Points | 100 |
| Supplemental Priority Points | |
| Benefits of the project restore and protect biodiversity and ecosystem health. | + 1-10 |
| The project will advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion across diverse communities. | + 1-5 |
| The project leverages funding through cost sharing with collaborators (points based proportionally on \$ requested relative to \$ co-funded) | + 1-5 |