

Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH) Pilot/Feasibility Projects Program Request for Proposals

Maximum \$20,000 per project
Release date: August 30, 2024
Letter of intent due date: **October 1, 2024**
Proposal due date: **November 4, 2024**

Mission

The Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health is a NIOSH-funded Agricultural Health and Safety Center, serving a highly productive agricultural area covering seven states in the north-central plains region. The Center's mission is to work with the agricultural community in the central states and beyond, conducting research, intervention, education, and outreach activities that aim to discover the mechanisms of injury and illness, and to develop, evaluate, and implement effective prevention strategies. The Center implements innovative, evidence-based solutions that address important agricultural safety and health problems in a collaborative manner with the agricultural community.

Pilot/Feasibility Program

Pilot/feasibility projects are fundamental to sustaining the quality, breadth, and dynamics of the Center program. These projects can lead to the development of new and creative research, prevention, intervention, outreach, education, evaluation, or translation findings and outcomes. They can explore new activities or directions or take advantage of special opportunities.

Pilot project duration is limited to 18 months and funding is limited to \$20K per project. Pilot projects are primarily intended to assist investigators to obtain pilot data that can be used in pursuing support through other funding mechanisms. Examples of pilot or feasibility project activities include:

- Initial support for developing novel, innovative, cutting-edge research, translation, prevention, intervention, education, or outreach approaches.
- Adapting and evaluating proven prevention, intervention, outreach, or education tools or techniques for new populations, work environments, or delivery systems.
- Obtaining preliminary data, mining existing state or national datasets, or pursuing critical data gaps.
- Supporting investigators from other fields of study to apply their expertise to agriculture safety and health challenges.
- Developing new mechanisms for external or multicenter collaborative partnerships to address emerging agriculture safety and health concerns; and
- Exploring new directions that represent significant departures from established approaches yet have the potential to yield great impacts.



Research conducted in or involving participants and communities in the CS-CASH seven states region will be given priority. These states include SD, ND, MN, IA, NE, KS, and MO. Projects that are directed toward improving the health and safety of underserved and vulnerable agricultural workers will be given priority.

Eligibility

Faculty, staff, students, and individuals with an interest in agricultural health and safety and the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed project are invited to develop an application. Eligible institutions include for-profit, nonprofit, public, or private institutions; units of local or state government and eligible Federal agencies; units of local and state tribal government; and faith- or community-based organizations. Trainees are encouraged to apply together with more senior researchers or faculty members. Junior researchers at early career stages are encouraged to apply. Women and individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, as well as individuals with disabilities, are especially encouraged to apply.

Application Procedures

Letter of intent, due October 1, 2024 should include the names of the principal investigator and co-investigators, title of the proposal and institution(s) involved.

Applications, due November 4, 2024 are to follow the general NIH guidelines for research proposals and should be organized as follows:

Proposal Sections	Page Limit
Cover page and executive summary (150 word max.)	1
Research plan	6
Specific aims (1)	
Significance and innovation (1)	
Preliminary studies (if any) (1)	
Approach (3)	
Utilization of CS-CASH facilities (if any)	1-2
Potential for future funding	1-2
Budget and justification	1-2
Please note: NO indirect costs are allowed.	
Timeline	1
Biosketch (PHS 398) or CV for each investigator	2 per investigator
Reporting and dissemination of results	1-2
If you have previously received funding from CS-CASH, briefly describe the project outcomes.	1-2



Application and Award Dates

Proposals are due on or before the due date: **Monday November 4, 2024.**

Please send all materials in one pdf file by e-mail to:

Ellen Duysen, MPH, Coordinator
Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health University
of Nebraska Medical Center ellen.duysen@unmc.edu
402-552-3394

Evaluations and scoring will be completed, and notification of funding status will be communicated to each investigator within 60 days after the proposal due date.

Investigators are strongly encouraged to consult with their institution's Institutional Review Board to find out whether a project is considered human subjects research (including surveys, interviews, screenings, etc.). For studies that need IRB approval, investigators are encouraged to complete an IRB application and submit it at the time that they submit their pilot project application, or to have a completed IRB form ready for submission, so that IRB approval can be obtained as soon as possible after the funding decision. A similar process should be followed for animal research. All investigators involved in human subject or animal research must have completed IRB training. Please contact your IRB provider for details.

Peer Review Process

Project applications will be evaluated by a review panel selected from the Center's Executive Committee, Internal Advisory Committee, External Advisory Committee members, and external content experts. The review process will follow procedures like those used by federal study sections, with assigned primary and secondary reviewers providing short written critiques. Evaluation and selection criteria will address originality, scientific relevance and importance to the region, relevance to Center goals and the NIOSH national occupational research agenda (NORA), validity and reliability of methods, qualifications of investigators, interdisciplinary nature of the project, potential for future funding, and appropriateness of the budget. All review panel members will score each project proposal according to the NIH scoring method. Review panel members will not participate in the evaluation of applications they submit or when they are a collaborator on another investigator's application under consideration at the time.

Appeal Process

Investigators who think an unfair or inaccurate peer evaluation process has occurred may submit a written appeal letter to the Center director outlining specific concerns about the process. At the discretion of the Center director, the appeal may be referred to outside consultants for additional review. Depending on the outcome of the appeal, a revised priority score for the application may be determined for special consideration of the proposal during the next round of applications.



Funding Available

A total of up to \$60,000 funding will be available for new pilot/feasibility projects each year. It is anticipated that the Center can fund three or four feasibility/pilot projects each year. Each award will be for a maximum duration of 18 months. Awards will range up to \$20,000 total funding. Funding is available for costs, such as salary and fringe benefits for research assistants and graduate students, laboratory supplies, equipment, data analysis costs, travel associated with research and conferences, and office expenses. **Reminder, no indirect costs are allowed on this funding. Please check with your institution to ensure that this submission is allowable without indirect costs.**

Emerging Issues

Additional funding may be available for projects that address emerging issues in agricultural safety and health. **Emerging issue project proposals may be submitted at any time throughout the year.** Please contact Ellen Duysen ellen.duysen@unmc.edu if you would like to have your project considered for review as an emerging issue.

Reporting Requirements

The principal investigator of each funded pilot/feasibility project will be invited to participate in the monthly CS-CASH member meeting. Investigators are required to submit a progress report at six and 12 months from the start of the project. A final report is due 60 days from the end of the project. The progress and final reports shall be submitted according to instructions provided by the Center and shall include reporting of work and activities relating to the current project awarded by the Center to the investigator/eligible institution.

Study Design, Statistical Analysis and Evaluation Support

If you feel your project proposal would benefit from consultation on study design, statistical analysis, or evaluation, we are available to assist you. We aim to enhance the success of all pilot projects by providing greater support to grant applicants. Please contact the CS-CASH evaluator, Cheryl Beseler, at chbeseler@unmc.edu for additional information and assistance.

Additional Information

For scientific questions, interested applicants are encouraged to contact Dr. Risto Rautiainen, Center Director rtautiainen@unmc.edu (402-559-4998) or Dr. Eleanor Rogan, Director of Pilot/Feasibility Projects egrogan@unmc.edu (402-559-4095). For administration questions, contact Ellen Duysen ellen.duysen@unmc.edu (402-552-3394).

Information on previously funded projects can be found at <https://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/documents/research/research-pilot-project-report.pdf>



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