

WHIRLING DISEASE INITIATIVE REQUEST FOR FULL PROPOSALS

January 10, 2006

Due date: Thursday, March 2, 2006; 5:00 pm (MST)

Whirling Disease Steering Committee
c/o Montana Water Center
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BACKGROUND

The Whirling Disease Initiative exists to counter the effects of the fish parasite *Myxobolus cerebralis*. The purpose of the Initiative is to provide fishery managers with as complete and effective a set of management tools as possible, to allow them to maintain populations of wild and native salmonids in the presence of the whirling disease parasite. Initiative goals are: to prevent introduction and establishment of the disease into streams that are parasite negative; and in parasite positive streams, to maintain or re-establish self-sustaining fish populations. The specific research priorities for 2006-2007 are laid out in the Five-Year Plan and the Request for Preproposals, which can be viewed at the URL cited above.

This represents the tenth *Request for Proposals* (RFP). Grants will be awarded based on scientific merit and response to Initiative priorities. The Whirling Disease Steering Committee encourages proposals that leverage funds through integrated research efforts. Partnerships between university researchers and agency field biologists to conduct field testing are very strongly encouraged.

2006-2008 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Release of RFPP: November 10, 2005

Preproposals due at the Water Center in electronic form: December 23, 2005 (5:00 pm MST)

Preproposal notification and request for full proposals: January 10, 2006

Full proposals due: March 2, 2006 (5:00 pm MST)

Category 1 project schedule:

- Announcement of project(s) chosen: April 8-14, 2006
- Projects begin: May 15, 2006
- Interim report and technical synthesis report due: December 31, 2006
- Interim report due: December 31, 2007

- Spending deadline for projects: September 30, 2008 (no exceptions)
- Final report and non-technical summary due: December 31, 2008
- Project metadata and datasets due to the Water Center: March 31, 2009

Category 2 project schedule:

- Announcement of project(s) chosen: April 8-14, 2006
- Projects begin: May 15, 2006
- Interim project report due: December 31, 2006
- Projects conclude; final report and non-technical summary are due to the Water Center: December 31, 2007
- Project metadata and datasets due to the Water Center: March 31, 2008

DATA SUBMITTAL, ACCESS & USE

A full set of data and descriptive metadata will be an obligated project deliverable, according to the terms of each research grant (categories 1 and 2). A *Data Use Agreement* is now in development and will be part of each research subcontract issued in 2006. A summary of the data policy investigators will be expected to follow is provided as an attachment to this RFP (see *Attachment A. Whirling Disease Initiative Data Submission and Use Guidelines* for details). Our data policy is based on the policies of other multiple-project, Federally-funded research programs, chiefly those of the National Science Foundation. Water Center data specialists will work with investigators to minimize the burden of this requirement.

Data release schedule:

- December 31, 2009: End of grace period for Category 2 projects; data are made publicly available; citations or manuscripts are added to database
- December 31, 2010: End of grace period for Category 1 projects; data are made publicly available; citations or manuscripts are added to database

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please submit your proposal electronically to Sue Faber at sfaber@montana.edu. MS Word, WordPerfect, PDF, and RTF files are acceptable. The **due date is March 2, 2006 at 5:00 pm (MST)**. The accompanying clearance letter(s) from the sponsoring organization(s) should be sent to the Montana Water Center by fax at the same time (Fax #406.994.1774).

Because the funding source of the Whirling Disease Initiative is annual, 2006-2007 research cycle awards will cover 20 months of expenses of Category 2 projects or 28 months of expenses for Category 1 projects. Multi-year projects will be considered, particularly when graduate student support requires it or when multi-grant projects address the goals listed in the RFPP and Five-Year Plan.

It is expected that the developments of Initiative-funded research will be freely available to other investigators for further whirling disease research. If your institution's patent

policy may prohibit this, please check with the Water Center before submitting a proposal.

DATA COLLECTION

Because future studies examining the environmental aspects of whirling disease may need to utilize multiple data sets, it is vital that information of this type be collected in a comparable way. Datasets submitted to the Initiative must follow documentation guidelines set forth in the Whirling Disease Initiative Data Submission Protocol and Metadata Questionnaire, both of which will be provided to PIs upon grant award.

Conformity of data collection methods is also desirable. Insofar as they can, investigators are encouraged to utilize the Standardized Whirling Disease Research Protocols assembled under the aegis of the Whirling Disease Foundation. These can be found at: <http://www.whirling-disease.org>.

PROPOSAL OUTLINE

Category 1 Research Projects

Institutional Clearance Form(s) - sent by fax

Title Page

Executive Summary (500 words or less)

Research Proposal (maximum of 12 pages, single spaced)

- Introduction

- Rationale/relevance to RFP research priorities: *This is where you make your case.*

- REQUIRED: State the questions that will be addressed by your broad-scale project.

State the questions that your modeling approach will address. State specific management applications of your research (see RFPP pages 2-3).

- Goals, Milestones, and Outcomes: *No lofty goals – be specific!* If you are requesting more than \$200,000, your project will be required to begin with the development of a technical synthesis of the 'state-of-the-science' of whirling disease (see page 3 of RFPP).

- Methods and Materials

- References cited

Budget

Budget Justification

Collaboration Justification (if applicable)

Names and Contact Information for Peer Reviewers

Investigators' Curricula Vitae

Category 2 Research Projects

Institutional Clearance Form(s) - sent by fax

Title Page

Executive Summary (250 words or less)

Research Proposal (maximum of six pages, single spaced)

- Introduction

- Rationale/relevance to RFP research priorities: *This is where you make your case.*

- Goals, Milestones, and Outcomes: *No lofty goals – be specific!*

REQUIRED: State specific on-the-ground management tools for field fisheries managers/biologists that will generated by your research (see RFPP page 3).

- Methods and Materials

- References cited

Budget

Budget Justification

Collaboration Justification (if applicable)

Names and Contact Information for Peer Reviewers

Investigators' Curricula Vitae

TITLE PAGE FORMAT

Project Title

Principal Investigators: names, titles, organizations, and full contact information

Project Category and Project Timeline

Project Funding: Whirling Disease Initiative funding request and match (actual and in-kind)

Date Submitted

WHIRLING DISEASE INITIATIVE BUDGET(S) - one for each institution to be issued a contract

Salaries - one line per person: Principal Investigator, Graduate Research Assistant, etc.

Benefits - total for all personnel

Travel

Supplies

Contracts for Services (including consultants)

Other Direct Costs

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS

Indirect Costs - Maximum 17% of TDC

PROJECT TOTAL

BUDGET GUIDELINES

Budgets should reflect up to 20 months of research for Category 2 projects and up to 28 months for Category 1 projects. Topical, management-oriented research projects have an upper limit of funding of \$100,000 and broad-scale projects have an upper limit of \$250,000. The indirect cost return rate may not exceed 17 percent of total direct costs. The Whirling Disease Steering Committee may recommend partial funding of a proposed project, so please make clear in your budget how research objectives are tied to specific spending amounts.

Matching funds are encouraged, and may be a factor in project selection. The sources, types, and value of the match should be cited in the budget justification text but omitted from the budget table itself.

These grants can fund technical and clerical assistance, graduate student stipends, contracted services, travel, supplies, equipment rental, and communication costs. Researchers utilizing the Wild Trout Research Lab should budget for its services according to the Lab's current fee / service schedule (see <http://watercenter.montana.edu/troutlab/default.htm>).

Budgeted travel should be limited to that directly related to the conduct of research, i.e., field travel and travel to the annual Whirling Disease Symposium.

Capital improvements (construction) to laboratories or other research facilities will not be funded, nor will tuition costs. Equipment acquisition cannot be funded. Equipment is defined as a material item with an acquisition cost of at least \$5,000 and a service life of more than three years.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION TEXT

Please include one budget justification page for each institution to be issued a contract (i.e. one for each of the foregoing budgets). On it list:

- Time commitments of the project personnel
- Benefit rates for project personnel
- Travel: anticipated trips, and best estimate of mode, mileage, and associated costs
- Supplies: basic description of items, amounts and applications
- Contracted Services: contractors, services provided, and qualifications
- Other direct costs – identify
- Match: describe the commitment of other funds and resources by the home institution or other sponsors or collaborators.

COLLABORATION JUSTIFICATION

If more than one organization is involved, please include a short explanation of everyone's responsibilities. Who is the Principal of the Principal Investigators? What are the roles of the other project personnel?

PEER REVIEWERS

Applicants are encouraged to provide the names of potential peer reviewers for their proposals. Peer reviewers and proposal PIs must not be closely associated.

CURRICULA VITAE

Insert a two- or three-page CV for each Principal Investigator, including previous work on whirling disease and publications resulting from that work.

CLEARANCE(S)

Proposals should be accompanied by a letter of support from an appropriate administrator of the home university or agency. If an award will result in multiple grants there must be one from each institution. These letters should give full contact information for the institutions' fiscal officers. Please send them by fax.

SELECTION PROCESS

If sufficient pertinent proposals have not been received, the Steering Committee will recruit additional project teams to prepare full proposals to compete for these funds.

At least three reviewers, selected by the Steering Committee, will review each proposal. The peer review will address scientific merit, feasibility, and contribution to Initiative research goals. Reviewers will be recognized scientific experts who are free from potential conflict of interest. This means no one who has submitted a proposal can serve as a reviewer and other ties between a PI and a potential reviewer must be made known by the reviewer, so that inappropriate reviews are not conducted. The identities of the reviewers will be kept confidential, unless they choose otherwise. The review texts will be shared with the investigators.

If the Steering Committee has questions about the proposed experimental design, the proposal may be referred to a statistician for review. The Steering Committee will read all proposals and all reviews, and will select projects based on their relevance to the stated research priorities and the opinions of the peer reviewers. The previous performance of the applicants on Initiative projects will also bear on project selection. When projects of equal merit must be ranked, the amount of match brought to the projects will be considered.