Global Food Systems Innovation Program
Request for Proposals

Overview
Kansas State University (KSU) has launched a multidisciplinary, initiative in Global Food Systems (GFS) that builds on Kansas State University's strengths and land-grant mission to help address the challenge of sustainably feeding a population that will double global food demand by 2050. Given the importance of food production to the Kansas economy, the innovation and knowledge resulting from this initiative are expected to assist with job creation and economic development within the state and to help Kansas remain a leader in food production. To this end, the State of Kansas has provided KSU with funding for GFS-related research activities. The GFS Innovation Program addressed by this Request for Proposals (RFA) is supported by this state funding.

The Global Food Systems Innovation Grant program invites applications for innovative research in all aspects of global food systems including but not limited to: increasing food production (includes both crops and livestock as well as crop yield improvement, pest management and animal health), better management of water and other resources/systems related to food production and distribution, better management of the food produced, keeping food systems safe (includes both food safety and bio/agro security), increasing food nutritional value, and combating obesity and nutritional illiteracy. Innovative educational and outreach (e.g., use of the Arts as an engagement medium) proposals related to these topics are also sought as are studies related to the policy, social concerns and economic factors which help drive food systems. Preference will be given to projects which are interdisciplinary, engaging multiple disciplines and multiple colleges. Proposals that combine science/engineering with social/economic considerations and/or education/outreach are highly desirable. Students (graduate and/or undergraduate) should be integrated into projects to help develop the future food systems workforce. Collaboration with industry is encouraged, particularly with Kansas-based companies or companies where there is an opportunity for job creation/investment within the state.

Funds made available through this innovation grant may support activities such as pilot projects, workshops, program development, marketing, equipment purchase, external consultants and temporary resources, etc. as appropriate to achieve the stated goals and objectives. Funds may not be used to sustain on-going operations or to support capital campaigns. The funding available is $500,000. Requests may be made up to a total of $100,000 in direct costs for a 1-year period of performance; however, most awards will be in the $20,000-$50,000 range.

Eligibility
Only KSU faculty and staff members are eligible to apply for seed grant funding under this opportunity. Subcontracting with another university/group is not allowed; however, external consultants may be funded.

Evaluation Criteria
1. The strength of the idea proposed and the clarity of its presentation.
2. The relevance of the project to the GFS initiative.
3. The capability of the project team to complete what is proposed.
4. Demonstrated collaboration involving multiple, diverse disciplines and multiple KSU colleges.
5. The ability of the project to meet two or more of the following job creation/economic development criteria:
   a. development of human capital support of the global food systems industry.
   b. attraction of new externally sponsored funding to solve GFS grand challenges and/or attract national attention to GFS issues through a regional or national showing
   c. Involvement of industry in the project, particularly Kansas-based companies or companies where there is an opportunity for job creation/investment within the state.
   d. Involvement of the private sector in funding the activity and/or the broader strategy the proposal supports.
e. Attraction/creation of jobs in Kansas
f. Enhancement of KSU’s reputation in GFS.

Application
Proposals should be to the point and have clearly stated goals and objectives. The methods/approach section should follow logically from the goals and objectives. An 11-pt, Times New Roman or Calibri font should be used with uniform 1” margins. Proposals must include:

- A transmittal sheet
- A cover sheet that includes the project title and the names/department/college of the PI and co-PIs (limited to two)
- A 3/4 –page abstract that summarizes the project proposed, relates the project’s relevance to the GFS initiative and discusses envisioned outcomes of the proposal if it is funded
- A project description (3-pages maximum) that includes a project statement with goals, objectives and anticipated outcomes; a background/justification section; a description of the research/project that will be conducted and a discussion of how the project will be used to attract outside funding and/or bring national/regional attention to GFS challenges and KSU’s ability to address them. The role of students in the project should be clearly articulated.
- A timeline with major milestones and deliverables.
- A participant list showing name, department, college, and project role.
- A biosketch (2-pages, NSF Format) for each participant.
- A budget using the NSF Standard Budget form with an accompanying justification. Indirect costs should not be included. Matching funds from industrial/private collaborators are encouraged and should be addressed in the budget justification.

The above components should be combined and submitted as a single pdf file.

Submission
Proposals are due by 5 pm CT on February 27th and should be submitted, with subject “GFS Proposal”, electronically to:

Mary Lou Marino, Proposal Development Officer
Office of Research
orsp@ksu.edu
785-532-6195

Review
Proposals will be reviewed in March. Feedback will be provided on proposals that are not funded.

Award and Project Reporting
Award announcements will be made in April. After award, PIs are required to attend monthly meetings of GFS project leaders to informally share results, report progress, and learn new techniques and perspectives that can be incorporated into their projects. Half way through the project year, each project group will be required to give a formal presentation of their progress, results, anticipated outcomes, and plans for next steps after project completion. While project students should attend these meetings, there will be a separate meeting for students later in the project year to present their work and the results of their efforts so far. The final required deliverable is submission of a competitive extramural proposal or pre-proposal to an external funding agency and a short report to the KSU Office of Research.