

2025 Guide to Writing a Realizing Environmental Innovation Program Proposal

PROPOSALS ARE DUE MONDAY, JANUARY 27th, 2025 @ 8PM PST

Complete and submit your application here:

<https://web.stanford.edu/dept/woods/cgi-bin/seed/woods-seed.php>

The Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment seeks to advance innovative solutions that private market, public policy and individual stakeholders can adopt and are of significant consequence in solving pressing environmental challenges facing people and the planet. These innovative solutions can include but are not limited to novel technologies, practices, approaches to behavior change, public policies or some combination.

The Realizing Environmental Innovation Program (REIP) is intended to provide next stage funding to faculty PIs with Academic Council or University Medical Line standing to validate and move existing interdisciplinary environmental research innovations toward adoptable solutions implemented by external stakeholders and partners. To be considered, projects should demonstrate significant progress in identifying a solution and strong potential for its viability for important solution stakeholders.

PIs with the most competitive proposals that strongly fit Woods priority focal areas and deemed most promising in terms of achieving environmental solutions will be invited to discuss their proposed project with a panel of external advisors to the REI Program and Woods leadership. The purpose of the interview is to answer questions about the proposal and to explore involving advising resources.

*The Stanford Woods Institute partners with the Stanford Graduate School of Business, members of our Advisory Council, and others outside of Stanford, where relevant, to help faculty identify advising resources for REIP projects. Project teams taking advantage of this offer have gained assistance in thinking through potential organizational models for delivering their discoveries and innovations, established new connections to relevant stakeholders and developed strategies for overcoming barriers to reaching end users. **Please contact Brian Sharbono, Director of Programs, Stanford Woods Institute, at sharbono@stanford.edu, if you are interested in opportunities to gain advising for your project.***

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The Realizing Environmental Innovation Program seeks later stage projects that, similar to the Woods Institute's long-standing Environmental Venture Projects (EVP) program:

- Are high-risk, transformative and have the potential to produce solutions to major global environmental challenges;
- Build on and extend interdisciplinary collaborations among Stanford faculty;
- Projects that address cross-cutting challenges that are relevant to one or more of the Woods Institute's objectives: Thriving Ecosystems on Land and in the Ocean, Natural Climate Solutions, Climate Change Adaptation, and Human and Planetary Health.
 - Address specific challenges for issues that might include: oceans, ecosystem services and conservation, environmental justice and equity, pollution and environmental health, freshwater, food security, climate risk and sustainable development and livelihoods.
- Demonstrate directly engaging and collaborating with external partners and stakeholders

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Proposed projects should:

- Represent one or more of the above program priorities;
 - All PIs must have Academic Council or University Medical Line standing;
 - Involve at least two PIs at Stanford from separate disciplines;
 - Demonstrate that significant research progress has been accomplished and results are promising;
 - Incorporate a clear strategy for moving research discovery and innovation into a solution to a major environmental challenge implementable by identified, non-academic stakeholders;
 - Demonstrate interest on the part of external stakeholders in the solution concepts;
 - Demonstrate how REIP funding will help move the project along that pathway;
 - Document how the collaborative effort will be stronger than the sum of disciplinary parts;
 - Explain why the project is at a stage where outside funding is not yet available, yet make a strong case that continued advancement holds real promise for outside financial support;
 - The Woods Institute will consider projects with budgets up to \$500,000 for a maximum award period of three years.
 - Former recipients of a Stanford Woods Institute EVP grant for the project are eligible, provided that significant progress was achieved and the project now meets the REIP priorities and guidelines. Faculty teams need not have received an EVP award to be eligible.
- Faculty members may only be Lead PI on one REIP application per cycle.
 - Likewise, a faculty member may not apply to Lead both an REIP grant and another grant from opportunities supported by Woods Institute funding, including Environmental Venture Projects (EVP), Big Ideas for Oceans (BIO) and Human and Planetary Health Early Career Awards (HPHECA), in the same application cycle.
 - Faculty members are also restricted from being the Lead PI on more than one active grant; faculty may not receive a new award that will overlap with an open award from previous cycle from the EVP, REIP, BIO and HPHECA funding channels.
 - However, faculty may be the Lead PI on consecutive grants from EVP, REIP, BIO or HPHECA. If a Lead PI's current award from one of these Woods-supported funding channels will close in 2025, with no further extensions beyond 2025, the Lead PI is eligible for award under the current call for proposals.
 - A Lead PI offered a consecutive Woods-supported award in 2025 will need to have any active grant award from EVP, REIP, BIO or HPHECA close in 2025 and must submit the required financial and narrative reports of any active award before the new award will begin.
 - *REIP grants must otherwise comply with the requirements and restrictions for awards of the Office of Sponsored Research.*

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about your project or research idea, or would like additional information, please contact Chris Field, Stanford Woods Institute Director at cfield@stanford.edu or Brian Sharbono, Director of Programs at sharbono@stanford.edu.

If you and your Research Administrator have questions about the budget and budget justification requirements, please contact Yiannis Katsamakidis, Woods Finance Analyst at yiannis.katsamakidis@stanford.edu and Brian Sharbono sharbono@stanford.edu.

If you have technical questions or issues in submitting your LOI through the online application system, please contact Keith Iverson, IT Manager at kailou@stanford.edu for assistance.

REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals are due Monday, January 27th, 2025, 8:00 pm PST. The Woods Institute may invite review from experts not on the external advisors committee, and project teams may be asked to respond to questions raised, which may involve revising their proposal. Awards will include an agreement with the project team for periodic update meetings with the Woods Institute and Advisors throughout the award period, in addition to annual reports.

Finalists for awards will be asked to complete an Ethics and Society Review Statement and respond to any feedback and questions raised regarding mitigating societal risks by the Stanford Ethics and Society Review panel. This is a distinct process from that of the IRB, and more information may be found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z3ZKvfcpn_BcE7S_AmcnJ8YmIoJrPC299UTbbdipcTQ/edit?usp=sharing

Upon satisfactory completion of the ESR process (~4 weeks), we will issue formal notices of award to finalists by approximately May 1 and move to award setup for start date October 1.

PROPOSAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

NOTE: THE LEAD PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR MUST INVOLVE THEIR QUALIFIED RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION CORRESPONDING TO THE PROPOSAL AND IS ADVISED TO DO SO EARLY ON.

A Research Administrator is a person who normally handles budget information. The Research Administrator is not considered a member of the research team.

Steps to anticipate for completing and submitting the application:

- 1.) **The Lead Principal Investigator** may begin an application for an EVP grant here: <https://web.stanford.edu/dept/woods/cgi-bin/seed/woods-seed.php>

The Lead Principal Investigator (Lead PI) must enter the Sunet IDs of the Lead PI and all Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) in the fields provided. At least one Lead PI and one Co-PI is required. All PIs entered will be validated for Academic Council or University Medical Line status against the faculty list provided by the Office of Faculty Affairs.

- 2.) **The Lead Principal Investigator** must also enter the SunetID of the Research Administrator for the proposal in the field provided for the application.
- 3.) **The Lead Principal Investigator** must upload the proposal narrative, or problem statement, as separate pdf where provided for in the application system.

The proposal narrative is to be completed per the instructions below.

- 4.) **The Research Administrator** for the project must upload the budget for the proposal as separate pdf within the application.

The budget is to be completed per the instructions below.

- 5.) **The Research Administrator** for the project must upload the budget justification, with complete explanations for each line item, as separate pdf within the application.

The budget justification is to be completed per the instructions below.

- 6.) After the Research Administrator has uploaded the budget and budget justification pdfs, the Lead PI will be able to view all pdf documents, and only the Lead PI may proceed to submit the proposal. A confirmation email will be sent to the Lead PI upon submission of the proposal to the Woods Institute application system.

NOTE: The Lead PI may resubmit the application as many times as desired until the deadline. The system only saves the most recent submission.

- 7.) **Stanford University requires that all faculty and Finance Administrators submitting a proposal to the Woods Institute and application system additionally initiate and submit a PDRF to the Office of Sponsored Research.**

Submission of project proposal to the Office of Sponsored Research: A PDRF (previously a backed-in proposal) is now required as part of the application process. It must be approved according to the submitting department's approval process by the proposal deadline. Please note, this requirement is not subject to the [5-day policy for proposal submissions](#). Please add (Yiannis Katsamakis yiannis.katsamakis@stanford.edu and Rita Sader rsader@stanford.edu) to the PDRF as an FYI. You can include your DFO as an approver if required by your school. The Department PTA setup contact should be the Research Admin submitting the PDRF. Please note: the new requirement will populate the Current and Pending Report with this grant opportunity.

1. Proposal Narrative Lead PI uploads as separate pdf within the application system.

Rules to write by:

- The EVP proposal narrative of Parts I – IV must not exceed 6 pages in length.
- This 6-page limit excludes the title and summary page and the addendum of biosketches, current and pending support for each PI and listing of scholarly references cited that support the proposal. Please keep Biosketches to two pages per person.
- Be concise and compelling. Excessively long proposals do not generally score extra points with the reviewers.
- Assume that invited external advisors and reviewers have limited familiarity with your topic. Avoid jargon and explain your ideas in language accessible to a diverse audience.

Please include the following as the narrative problem statement pdf that you upload:

Title and Summary Page (not counted as part of the 6 page limit)

List project title, team members and project period (Oct. 1, 2024 – Sept. 30, 2027, if three years).

Include one brief paragraph in **layperson's language** describing the key objectives of the research proposal. If your proposal is funded, this paragraph will be used in marketing materials and published on the Woods website.

Part I - Problem Statement (Parts I – IV are limited to 6 pages, including use of figures)

The proposal should describe the following in clear terms (minimal use of jargon):

- a. Please describe your effort in the larger framework of the major environmental challenge your work will help to solve.
- b. The problem your proposal addresses and its importance
- c. Your research findings and innovation to date
- d. The research to be pursued by the PIs and research team.
- e. Which non-academic external stakeholders and partners have you spoken with about the fit of your initial discovery and solution concept with their needs? Which have expressed interest and which, if any, have incorporated your findings and innovation into their actions? How has this informed the research, project objectives and the desired results of this proposal?

Part II - Knowledge to Action Plan

Who will you engage with and what will you do to ensure that your research results in actual change?

- a. Please describe the pathway(s) through which your research findings are likely to lead to solutions, e.g., through private markets (new products and service; changes to industrial or business practices), government policies (rules, regulations, laws, public management practices, procurement) or behavior changes among individuals (including with NGOs).
- b. Please describe how you anticipate engaging non-academic external stakeholders during the award period, and how you envision stakeholder engagement may shape the form of solutions to come from this project. Who on the team will lead external engagement and the investigation of market/policy/community fit for the emergent solutions?

External stakeholders and partners may be decision makers in government charged with public policymaking and public management related to the motivating environmental issue and/or your approach. They may be existing companies, a startup, venture capital interests, a relevant NGO, community groups or other organizations with capacity to adopt or implement your findings at some scale.

- c. How do you envision the solutions derived from this work will be organized and deployed?
- d. What factors may facilitate and what factors may inhibit the transmission of your research discoveries into action to solve the major environmental challenge motivating this project?
- e. Please share any additional thoughts regarding transforming your research into adopted solutions, including resources you believe will be required and assistance you are interested in.
- f. Envisioning the conclusion of a REIP grant awarded for this research, what does success look like? How will you judge success for this project?

Part III – Interdisciplinary Team

Describe the composition of your team, explaining to what extent the PIs bring different disciplines and diverse strengths, and how the team will work as an integrated unit. Please consider how you might have undergraduate and graduate students become involved in the research effort.

- a. Faculty Lead Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator(s)
- b. Other Individuals involved and contribution to the project
- c. External collaborators
- d. Indicate if team members have worked together before.
- e. Define research roles and responsibilities. Be sure to articulate how the team will work together and how the collaborative effort will be stronger than the sum of disciplinary parts.

Part IV – Funding

- a. What are the sources of support and amounts to date for your research in this area?
- b. Explain why additional support is needed at this time and why a Stanford Woods Institute REIP award is appropriate?
- c. What is your vision for subsequent investment needs? By the conclusion of this award, what type and level of additional investments and other resources do you expect will be required to gain greater deployment, adoption and use of your solution approach outside of the university, if validated? List specific types and sources of funding which you believe progress under an REIP award grant will enable you to be competitive in pursuing.

Addendum (not counted as part of the 6 page limit)

- a. Current and pending support information for each investigator, including other sources to which you have or will be submitting this project for consideration.
- b. Biosketch for each investigator (maximum 1 page for each)
- c. List of scholarly references cited to support your proposal

2. Budget Research Administrator uploads as separate pdf to application system

Note: The project's Research Administrator must be involved in the development of the proposal budget and justification to ensure compliance, including with Stanford budget rates, rules on use, etc. A Research Administrator is a person who normally handles sponsored project budget information. The Research Administrator is not considered a member of the research team. Only the Research Administrator indicated in the application is able to upload the Budget and Budget Justification pdfs and must do so before the PI will be able to submit the proposal. Please use the budget and justification templates available at the Office of Research Administration: <https://ora.stanford.edu/resources/proposal-preparation-resources/budgets-and-budget-justifications>.

Provide the following information:

- Salary
- Benefits
- Tuition
- Travel Domestic
- Travel International
- Participant Support
- Participant Travel
- Equipment Lease
- Equipment
- Professional/Consultant Services
- Materials and Supplies
- SLAC Charges
- Student Stipend
- Interdepartmental Costs Other
- Animal Care
- Other Inclusions

Important Instructions and Limitations

- The Woods Institute will consider REIP projects with budgets up to \$500,000 over three years (thus approximately \$167,000 per year). Award period: October 1, 2025 – up to September 30, 2028.
- **Faculty salary is not required. Faculty salary may not be more than 20% of the total budget, inclusive of any salary to faculty collaborating via a subaward. Requests will be closely scrutinized. The justification should state and well explain if it is for summer supplement salary.**
- **Salary support is not permitted for outside collaborators.**
- Support may be requested for personnel (undergraduate, graduate, or postdoctoral scholars, research assistants or associates), supplies, equipment and travel. (Equipment is considered as such if it has a useful life of more than one year and is over \$5000 in expenditure.)
- Roles are required to be clearly and substantively defined and the expenditure intended for each to be made explicit in the budget justification sections.

- Please consider how you might have undergraduate and graduate students become involved in the research effort. They are an invaluable resource in the university's education and research mission.
- There may be occasions when hiring consultant/professional services may be necessary to support the grant when these services cannot be deployed through Stanford resources, including facilities and personnel (translation, sample collection, laboratory analysis, for example). Such consultant/professional services may be funded if there is a strong case for their involvement.
- A request for funds to support outside research collaboration (**this is not consultant/professional services**) requires a subaward and needs to be very well justified, including why the support is essential for the collaboration and how the expertise is not available at Stanford.
- Please refer to the web page below for more information to discern between a subaward and consultant/professional services: <https://doresearch.stanford.edu/policies/research-policy-handbook/subawards/definitions-and-classifications>
- **If your proposal includes a request for a subaward and this is approved, Form 33 will be required 30-days after the award letter is received. If this deadline is not met, the grant will not be awarded and funding will not be transferred.**
- **For any proposed subawards, in lieu of Form 33, a clear scope of work must be included in the budget justification, and a signed letter of support from the partner must be submitted along with the proposal.** The letter of support must contain:
 - Statement of commitment to the proposed REIP project
 - Description of how the proposed work aligns with their organizational goals and mission, and the proposed REIP project
 - Description of the unique expertise or experience that the partner brings to the project
 - Description of the tasks they will undertake as part of the REIP award
 - A statement of the organization's readiness to manage subaward funds responsibly, in compliance with Stanford regulations and reporting policies
 - A description of how the partner and the Stanford Principal Investigator have worked together in the past - and, if this is a new partnership - a statement of commitment to how they will ensure a successful and productive partnership, ensuring that project deliverables are kept on-track.
- **Approval of a proposed subaward within a Stanford Woods Institute grant is at the discretion of the Institute. Please note the following key parameters as guidance on use of funds through a subaward to support the objectives of the awarded project. Please note the uses of funds that are prohibited.**
 - Funds may not be used to support salaries at US universities or peer institutions in other countries.
 - Funds should not be used to support staff salaries in higher-income country NGOs.
 - The Stanford Woods Institute will consider uses of funds that support faculty salaries in lower-income country institutions, subject to the limitation that all faculty salaries on the award including subaward not exceed 20% of the budget.
 - The Stanford Woods Institute will consider uses of funds that support the involvement of students or post-docs in lower-income country institutions.
 - The Stanford Woods Institute will consider uses of funds that support the involvement of staff at lower-income country NGOs.

- The Stanford Woods Institute encourages co-development of projects. However, PIs should avoid outsourcing the leadership of the project being awarded the Woods Institute grant.
 - Evidence of real engagement from Stanford PIs and other participants is required.
 - Projects with professional services and subaward contracts that exceed 50% of the total proposed award budget are discouraged and will only be considered in the most unusual of circumstances.
- Conferences or workshops will not be funded.
 - Enter all budget numbers in US dollars rounding up to the nearest whole dollar values.
 - Inflation factor: 4% per year for salary, 4% for tuition.
 - Effective dates for salary increase: 10/1 for faculty, 9/1 for staff
 - ***Do not include ISC in your budget.*** REIP research grant applicants do not need to account for indirect charges (IDC) or infrastructure charges (ISC) in their project budgets. ISC is charged to and paid by the Stanford Woods Institute on behalf of each awarded project at the time of funding.
 - **Provide a clear and complete justification for each budget line, in the pdf below.** Justification should not include narrative related to calculations, but rather the use and benefit to the project.

3. Budget Justification Research Administrator uploads as separate pdf to application system.

Note: The project's Research Administrator must be involved in the development of the proposal budget and justification to ensure compliance, including with Stanford budget rates, rules on use, etc. A Research Administrator is a person who normally handles budget information. The Research Administrator is not considered a member of the research team. **Only the Research Administrator indicated in the application is able to upload the Budget and Budget Justification and subaward pdfs and must do so before the PI will be able to submit the proposal.**

Please provide a clear, detailed, narrative budget justification for each budget line item in the proposal and describe (with specifics) how the budget line supports the scope of work. Include a clear and substantive definition of team roles, where not included in the project description.

Please use the budget and justification templates available at the Office of Research Administration and provide robust explanations: <https://ora.stanford.edu/resources/proposal-preparation-resources/budgets-and-budget-justifications>.

Budgets will be scrutinized in this final step of the REIP review process, so please make sure that your budget is accurate and reflects realistic needs.