



Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin State Legislative Funding Request for Proposals #2

For Phase II Campus, System, and Community-level Water Education, Research,
and Innovation Projects/Programs

Proposal Submission Deadline: June 1 at 5:00 p.m.

Introduction

The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin (FCW) partners with Wisconsin's 13 public universities to advance freshwater research and education, build partnerships with communities and industry, and contribute to a thriving water agenda in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin State Legislature has awarded FCW \$5 million in this biennial budget to support freshwater initiatives at UW System campuses that align with FCW's goals and legislative priorities. The FCW has a total of \$800,000 available in 113 funds to support this round of proposals, contingent on available legislative funds.

This FCW State Legislative Funding 2021-2023 grant program deviates from many traditional grant programs to enhance equity in the selection process, accelerate access to funding, and build upon existing efforts that are likely to foster alignment between the FCW's mission and goals and individual campus goals and investments.

Program Purpose and Rationale

The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin must demonstrate its viability, economic importance, and sustainability to the State Legislature prior to budget negotiations for the 2023-2024 biennial budget. The Legislature will require evidence for a positive return on investment prior to committing additional funds to the FCW. There, the FCW must produce evidence of the efficacy and role of the Freshwater Collaborative in developing a vibrant freshwater workforce for the State of Wisconsin.

The purpose of the 2022-2023 State Legislative Funding Request for Proposals is twofold:

1. Fund new or ongoing high-impact projects that will yield demonstrable evidence of the utility of the FCW by June 1, 2023. Approximately 50% of available funds will be earmarked for these projects.
2. Provide funding for 12- to 18-month innovative projects that lay the groundwork for long-term, successful collaborations among UW System institutions.

State Legislative Directives and FCW Priorities

- Devise new water-centric training programs focused on undergraduates (science and innovation).
- Provide scholarships and student support to retain and attract new talent and more students.
- Amplify FCW's marketing efforts to communicate Wisconsin's role in freshwater science, including branding Wisconsin as the global leader in freshwater.
- Enhance workforce development programming (economic growth goal).
- Recruit dedicated faculty and staff to advance training programs, research, and innovation (science and innovation goal).
- Foster collaborative research and initiatives between 13 UW universities, the private sector, community, and state institutions that address the 10 Grand Water Challenges, with a specific focus on Agricultural Water Management (Challenge 1) and Water Quality Safety and Emerging Contaminants Challenge 3).

- The [10 Grand Water Challenges for Wisconsin](#) are:
 1. Agricultural Water Management (legislative focus)
 2. Industrial Water Engineering and Technology
 3. Water Quality Safety and Emerging Contaminants (legislative focus)
 4. Great Lakes Management and Restoration
 5. Water Infrastructure: Collection, Distribution, Treatment
 6. Water Business and Finance
 7. Watershed Management and Restoration
 8. Water Security, Protection and Resilience
 9. Healthy Recreational and Transportation Water Use
 10. Aquaculture/Aquaponics/Water Food Systems

Strategic Priorities

From the list of state legislative directives/priorities, the FCW has compiled the following list of how the FCW will accomplish the directives. This list greatly includes a pipeline to jobs among other things:

- Community Engagement
- Student Recruitment
- Student Retention/Learning
- Collaborative Research
- Collaborative Curriculum
- Industry Partnerships
- Internship Placement
- Career Placement
- Broadening Perspectives in the Water Sector
- Growing and Strengthening the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin

Funding Levels and Program Terms

Up to \$800,000 is available under this program. Projects may have a six- or twelve-month term. To comply with the June 30, 2023 deadline to demonstrate impact to the State Legislature, proposals must include six-month project benchmarks. All proposals must complete the metrics and a data reporting plan template provided in this RFP. The FCW will disperse funds on a six-month basis pending demonstrable progress towards these benchmarks, FCW goals, and proposal outcomes.

For proposals that involve multiple universities, one university must submit ONE joint proposal on behalf of all the universities involved. Each institution's contribution/involvement must be clearly described in the Project Narrative. A budget for each institution must be submitted within the joint proposals (e.g., if three universities are participating in the program or course, the single joint proposal must include three separate budgets).

In addition, to further increase the financial sustainability of the FCW, grant awardees are required to commit to apply for three external awards.

Project Eligibility

Preference will be given to proposals that clearly enhance the vision, visibility, economic importance, and sustainability of the FCW. **Proposals must reflect comprehensive water programming and**

initiatives on your campus, not one-off courses, and how they fit into the overall mission of the campus and the FCW.

All proposals must align with FCW's core values of honesty, integrity, respect, innovation, equity, and personal accountability. Project also must include collaborations and efforts to increase diversity and inclusion of people under-represented in the water sector (including but not limited to: Black, first-generation college, Hmong, Indigenous, Latinx, LGBTQIA, low-income, people with disabilities, people identifying as women, and rural populations).

Focus Areas

This RFP encourages a wide array of projects that focus on different aspects of freshwater in Wisconsin. Ideal proposals will address the following elements:

1. Collaboration

The FCW seeks to fund purposeful collaborations with impact, including interdisciplinary collaborations on a single campus, collaborations between students and faculty/staff, and collaborations between campuses. FCW also seeks to build and enhance the strength of relationships among the FCW member institutions.

2. Transformative Experiences

Transformative experiences are designed to fundamentally challenge personal assumptions and preconceptions as well as beliefs and values, and affect how a person understands themselves, others, and the world. The FCW seeks to support hands-on electives that will grow a student's network across Wisconsin, with a focus on learning goals associated with the 10 Grand Water Challenges. In addition, transformative experiences must contain at least three of the following experiences:

- Field experience
- Lab experience
- Computer experience (possibly for data analysis, design work, etc.)
- Connections to career and networking opportunities
- Testing towards a credential
- Growing awareness of water career opportunities
- Incorporates a [High-Impact Practice](#)
- Internships
- Undergraduate research and conference presentation (see Appendix for additional details)

3. Matching Funds and External Commitments

The FCW cannot depend on a single source of support and thus must develop additional revenue streams and external support, such as grant funding, industry partnerships, and university support. **While not required, projects that include matching funds, industry partnerships or definitive University commitment will be prioritized.** University commitment can be demonstrated by in-kind support, covering the costs for analytical instrumentation and expenses, research funding, release time, or other mechanisms. Consult with the business and/or financial manager for your administrative unit for the options available at your institution.

Award Types

Awards will support student engagement and learning programs. Award types are:

- 1. Student Experiences:** Experiential learning opportunities for students that are not offered for credit. Examples include:

- a. Spring Break or UWinterIM trip related to freshwater
 - b. Student fieldwork development
 - c. Freshwater camp to recruit prospective students
 - d. Collaborative projects with community and industry partners focused on advancing freshwater initiatives with students
 - e. Supplies, materials, and safety/protective equipment for student fieldwork
- 2. Course Development:** Supports the creation of Transformative Experiences (TEs) for the FCW collaborative curriculum (see Appendix). Examples include:
- a. Enhancing or amplifying courses to include TE components
 - b. Developing new TE courses
 - c. Planning collaborative course logistics
- 3. Scholarships:** Examples include:
- a. Supporting students who engage in activities that enhance career prospects by alleviating financial constraints (i.e., a student would need to quit a part-time job to participate in research or take an unpaid internship)
 - b. Stipends for participation in research, fieldwork, and internships
 - c. Cover differential tuition between campuses
- 4. Collaborative Research:** This can be research that is collaborative and/or has the potential for future cross-functional collaboration (must be discussed in proposal) with other institutional departments on campus or with other campuses. Examples include:
- a. Interdisciplinary water research
 - b. Cross-campus water research
 - c. Engaging students as data collectors and research assistants
 - d. Community engaged water research
- 5. Career development:** Examples include:
- a. Growing internship programming at multiple campuses
 - b. Job placement opportunities
 - c. Industry, policy, and non-profit partnerships

Proposal Submission Requirements

Each applicant university will compile proposals to contain all the necessary materials for each individual project.

Steering Committee Representatives must sign off on all proposals prior to submission. Proposals must be submitted following your institution's policy for proposal submissions. In the case of the comprehensives, this means working with your institution's Office of Sponsored Programs.

The proposal must include the following items for each proposed project. Application including downloadable forms are available at: <https://freshwater.wisconsin.edu/rfp2-2022-submission-guidelines/>

- **Project Narrative:** Describe the proposed project, how it aligns with FCW strategic initiatives, and the anticipated impact at the campus and state level, with consideration of how the project contributes to growing and strengthening FCW.
- **Budget:** Identify the anticipated expenses and provide a timeline for using funds. List any grants, matching funds from the campus, or other financial sources highlighting requested FCW funding.

Faculty course-buyouts are allowable costs. Indirect costs are not allowable. Allowable personnel are limited-term employees, adjunct instructors (up to 18 months), graduate assistants, and hourly students. Faculty course buyouts are allowed.

- **Data Reporting Plan:** Identify the metrics, methods, and the campus’s role and plan for data collection and reporting for the proposed project. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) has developed several metrics per award type (see Appendix). Campuses are expected to review NORC metrics and detail their plan. If campuses need to tweak these metrics, NORC is available to help.
- **Endorsement Page:** Obtain the signatures of the applicant and collaborators, applicant’s supervisor or department chair, the Steering Committee Member, and the Provost and/or Academic Affairs representative. This will be used to determine campus support and buy-in for the proposed project.
 - **Endorsement Page for UW-Madison:** Applicant must use the WISPER electronic routing application to secure department and dean/director/division-level authorizations. Division-authorized WISPER records should be routed to WISPER user RUSSELL SCHWALBE in department 34-0200. Please set the “submission method” field in the WISPER record to “internal routing only.” The record does not need to be routed through the Research and Sponsored Programs office.
 - **Endorsement Page for UW-Milwaukee:** Applicants do not need to complete a WISPER record. Work to secure appropriate department and dean/director/division-level authorizations.
- **Other supporting documents** such as letters of support, brochures, or program information.

Proposal Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of six impartial external and internal reviewers with academic and legislative experience and will make funding recommendations to the FCW Executive Director. The review committee may request additional information, clarifications, and/or edits before making a determination on proposals. The Executive Director will make final decisions on the awards. **We strongly encourage all applicants to read the scorecard, sent along with this document, that the review committee will be using to evaluate the proposals.**

The scorecard for review is as follows:

FCW MISSION	
Meets FCW priorities	5
Demonstrates collaboration as defined by FCW RFP	5
Details how work broadens perspectives in the water sector	5
IMPACT	
Includes an evaluation plan that details FCW and original metrics, implementation plan, and the person or entity who will be completing the evaluation activities	5
Describes intended impact at campus, community, and state level and demonstrates how this impact will be made.	5
Addresses 10 GWC of focus	5

FEASIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Clearly states goal, target audience, and desired outcome	5
Describes both the stated need this initiative is meeting and how it is being met.	5
Provides evidence that there is campus support and campus resources supporting the project	5
Program can continue without grant funds	5
Project aligns with overall strategy of institution	5
Demonstrates stakeholder buy-in in the initiative. This includes letters of support, an established relationship, and/or ethical and sufficient incentives.	5
Creates new partnerships in freshwater science, industry, and community.	5
Community engagement component	5

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Details student recruitment plan	5
Provides hands-on experiences to students	5
Details support and other mechanisms to ensure participation for the full duration of student experience	5
Demonstrates consideration for accessibility for all students including marginalized groups, non-traditional students, students with disabilities, and other groups who may have barriers to participation	5
Includes a component that gives students the tools to articulate their experience to future employers or graduate schools. This can include a resume writing workshop, shared resource, or assignment.	5
Details how this opportunity trains students to tackle the 10 GWCs	5
TOTAL:	100

Once the award is determined, the steering committee member will be notified and given an award letter. The award letter will include details on 113 funds disbursement and data reporting.

Program Contact

Please direct all questions to Marissa Jablonski, Director of the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin, at jablons5@uwm.edu.

Award Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Indicators

The table below lists the campus-level performance indicators for each funding award type: Student Experiences, Course Development, Student Scholarships, Collaborative Research and Career Development. These indicators cover a range of program inputs: (i.e., funding received) outputs (i.e., scholarships or stipends administered) short-term results (i.e., courses internships completed), mid-term results (i.e., number and type of industry partnerships developed), and longer-term outcomes (i.e., student graduations with FCW degrees and job placements in freshwater-related industries).

In the application, PIs will download and submit a Data Reporting Plan. In the plan, please identify the indicators that are most appropriate to the timeline and content of the proposed activities. The data for some of these indicators may be collected and reported at the campus level (i.e., number and type of collaborative research projects created) using site-level data sources. Other indicators may be collected and reported centrally by FCW evaluation staff (i.e., student participation in cross-campus collaborations), using university system data sources. The FCW administrative team is working with an evaluation, monitoring, and reporting team to implement standardized and consistent collection and reporting of these indicators across the FCW campuses.

AWARD TYPE	INDICATORS
Student Experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of student experiences developed and/or enhanced with FCW funds. 2. Number of students that participated in student experience. Please include for each student experience if more than one is included in proposal 3. Number of students from underrepresented groups that participated in student experience. Please include for each student experience if more than one is included in proposal 4. Impact of student experience on student learning and engagement with Freshwater. 5. Name of ten grand water challenge(s) addressed by student experience. Please include for each student experience if more than one is included in proposal 6. Extent to which student experience incorporates diverse perspectives, including under-represented groups in the water sector. Please include for each student experience if more than one is included in proposal 7. Approximate number of students reached with student experience recruitment efforts. 8. Campus support services and programs to promote participation in co-curricular activities
Course Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of courses developed and/or enhanced with FCW funds. 2. Percent of new and/or enhanced course content about grand water challenges. Please include for each course if more than one is included in proposal

AWARD TYPE	INDICATORS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Percent of new and/or enhanced course content incorporating diverse perspectives, including under-represented groups in the water sector. Please include for each course if more than one is included in proposal 4. Number of degrees/minors/ certificates that require this course. 5. Number of degrees/minors/ certificates that list this course as an elective option 6. Approximate number of students reached with course recruitment efforts.
Collaborative Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number and name of FCW collaborative research projects and projected start and end dates. 2. Name of <i>targeted counties</i> that directly benefit from FCW collaborative research projects. 3. Name of <i>targeted industry partner(s)</i> that directly benefit from and/or contribute FCW collaborative research projects. 4. Total number of FCW students that participate in FCW <i>collaborative research project</i>. 5. Total number of FCW students from underrepresented groups in the water sector that participate in FCW <i>collaborative research project</i>. 6. Name of ten grand water challenges that are addressed by FCW collaborative research projects. 7. Name of completed FCW collaborative research projects with publicly published or presented findings.
Career Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of new partnerships formalized between targeted industry partners and FCW. 2. Name of <i>targeted counties</i> that directly benefit from new FCW partnership(s). 3. Number and name of 10 grand water challenges represented in new FCW partnership(s). 4. Extent to which new FCW partnership(s) encompasses diverse perspectives, including under-represented groups in the water sector.

Definitions of Strategic Priorities

In collaboration with UW Campuses, UW System, Wisconsin State Legislature, and Freshwater organizations and industry, the FCW has established the following approaches for supporting the strategic priorities:

Community Engagement	Building relationships with communities and identifying how FCW and campuses can help meet community freshwater needs. This also needs to consider issues and challenges that impact community access to freshwater.
Student Recruitment	FCW is looking to recruit from all communities including those currently underrepresented in the water sector with a local, regional, national, and international scale.
Student Retention/Learning	The FCW programming needs to engage students through hands-on water training that offers them real world experience and transforms their future career prospects.
Industry Partnerships	Linking the FCW, its curricula, and its students to industry gives a pathway to fund and tackle the 10 Grand Water Challenges [SEE appendix] through research and development and in-the-field applications.
Internship Placement	Internship placements can be made by growing current campus career services programming and hosting a regional water and environment career fair.
Job Placement	Job placements can be made by growing our internship programming and secured because students will have work experience in freshwater science, policy, etc., and have a marketable skill set and demonstrated competency (i.e., fieldwork, research, internship, project-based skillset, etc.).
Collaborative Research	FCW-supported research should tackle the 10 Grand Water Challenges and offers hands-on real-world problem solving and learning to students. FCW will focus these undergraduate research experiences on cross-campus collaborations to expand the possibilities for growth for each student.
Collaborative Curriculum	Courses can be offered at more than one campus-- possibly at all 13. Funds can be used for planning and working through the logistics of sharing courses (i.e., financials, student credit hours, etc.). A curricular core is being developed to offer majors, minors, certificates, concentrations in the future. The vision includes undergraduate, and graduate programs that utilize the expertise of faculty from across the state to structure a strong, comprehensive freshwater learning experience.

<p>Broadening Perspectives in the Water Sector</p>	<p>Broadening Perspectives in the Water Sector needs to be incorporated into all things above. This focuses on under-represented populations in the water sector (including Black, first-generation college, Hmong, Indigenous, Latinx, LGBTQIA, low-income, people with disabilities, people identifying as women, and rural populations).</p>
<p>Growing & Strengthening FCW</p>	<p>All projects must address this as part of the application and must answer how the outcome of the proposal promotes the value of the FCW and why it should receive the State’s support.</p>

Definition of Transformative Experiences

Transformative Experiences should tackle at least one of the 10 Grand Water Challenges (recognizing that most challenges are not monolithic, there is a lot of overlap and addressing them will often involve multiple perspectives. It is expected that every campus, regardless of their strengths, likely brings something to the table for nearly all of the 10 Grand Water Challenges).

The FCW core will be developed to include tracks that, respectively, act as ‘deep dives’ into one or more of the 10 Grand Water Challenges. By choosing Transformative Experiences within one track, a student will have a designation of this ‘deep dive’ on their transcript. Students who prefer to mix and match tracks will graduate with a generalized focus. Using UW-Milwaukee as an example with a Freshwater Sciences major and minor, here is a draft of what may be the designation on a student’s transcript choosing the Emerging Contaminants Track:

- **Major:** Major in Freshwater Sciences with a focus on Emerging Contaminants through the FCW
- **Concentration:** Major in Freshwater Sciences with a concentration in Emerging Contaminants through the FCW
- **Minor:** Minor in Freshwater Sciences with a focus on Emerging Contaminants through the FCW
- **Certificate:** Certificate in Freshwater Sciences with a focus on Emerging Contaminants through the FCW

Students will be required to take Transformative Experiences away from their home campus. This will create collaborations between UW campuses and require FCW students to learn the waters of Wisconsin and network with their peers across the state. **The FCW, if fully funded, will have funds to support student travel and housing while away from their home campuses.** To the extent that we can, we will take individual considerations into account in order to be as inclusive as possible. Hybrid bootcamps and other online experiences will also be developed for non-traditional students who are not able to travel. The more options we can provide, the less program exceptions/executive actions we will have to make.

There are two instructional options for Transformative Experiences:

Collaborative instruction / Collaborative learning: Transformative Experiences that are created and taught by multiple instructors from more than one UW University. These courses count toward the Transformative Experience requirements for all FCW students, regardless of what campus they call home.

Non-collaborative instruction / Collaborative learning: Transformative Experiences that are created and taught by a single-instructor or by various instructors at a single institution. These courses count toward Transformative Experience requirements for all FCW students except those whose home campus is the same as the instructor’s home campus. Instead, these students can count the Transformative Experience as elective credits towards other non-FCW requirements.

An example: Milwaukee offers a beach monitoring course, students from the other 12 UW Universities can count this Transformative Experience towards their Transformative Experience requirements. If Milwaukee collaborates with Oshkosh to offer the course collaboratively, the Transformative Experience can now count toward the Transformative Experience requirements at all 13 UW universities.

Timeline for RFP #2

3/15/22	Send RFP #2 guidelines for review and comment
3/28/22	Review comments, modify RFP as necessary
4/1/21	Publish RFP #2
6/1/22	RFP #2 Proposal deadline
7/1/22	External reviewers complete evaluation of proposals; recommend funding
7/15/22	Notify recipients of funding awards from RFP #2