

2026-27 Request for Applications

HICAHS Emerging Issues Short-Term Projects



Overview

In accordance with its mission, the [High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety \(HICAHS\)](#) offers funding to support projects in agricultural health and safety research. As one of several [Agricultural Safety and Health Centers](#) funded by the [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#), HICAHS has established a program to support Emerging Issues Projects. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Emerging issues are defined as health risks that are new or have rapidly expanding impact in the immediate or near future. The Emerging Issues Program is designed to provide a structure to identify issues of high priority for regional producers and the flexibility for HICAHS to respond rapidly. All funds for emerging issues will be used to address priorities identified by HICAHS constituents including producers, Extension Agents, the HICAHS External Advisory Board, and other Agricultural and Forestry partners in the High Plains Intermountain Region. Projects and use of funds may vary depending on the need and availability.

Projects in this cycle will be funded at a level of up to \$24,200 for a varying project duration.

The requirements and criteria for emerging issues projects are described below. Projects should respond to a clear **burden**, fill a specific **emerging need**, and have measurable **impacts** on injury and illnesses in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries.

Approach

Emerging Issues in agricultural worker health and safety identified by HICAHS advisory board and partners include:

- Extreme weather/climate change, particularly heat stress & illness prevention, wildfire smoke and ash inhalation
- Infectious diseases, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
- One Health (Interconnections between animal, environmental, and human health)
- Labor issues, particularly labor shortages and high turnover
- Robotics, automation, & artificial intelligence
- Silica exposures
- Hearing conservation
- Land-based fish production/aquaculture
- Issues related to youth on the farm
- Mental health
- Substance use
- Distracted machinery operation
- Musculoskeletal disorders

Additional topics will be considered, but applications should justify why the topic is an emerging issue.

Proposed emerging issues and projects will be prioritized and selected by the HICAHS Leadership Team, with final decision on funding by the program director, Dr. Morgan Valley. Investigators and students of all levels are invited to apply.

Application Instructions

Applicants should submit a short (no more than 2 pages) proposal describing:

- The Problem and the associated Burden (risk, population affected)
- Project Objectives
- Approach, including a detailed plan on how the study can be completed within the proposed timeframe
- Likely Outcome or Result
- Potential Impact
- A Brief Budget (can be on a 3rd page)
- Letter(s) of Support (optional but encouraged)

Submit your application electronically in a single PDF file to: morgan.valley@colostate.edu. **We will conduct rolling rapid reviews of proposals.**

Colorado State University Applicants

Applicants from CSU (including Extension Services and Satellite locations) Principal Investigators require full OSP review prior to submitting an application and must be entered into the Kuali Research Proposal Development system.

Applicants from affiliate organizations

Applications from other universities and affiliate organizations are strongly encouraged to work with their sponsored programs office at their institution to meet all pre-application requirements specific to their organization.

Budget Guidance

All awards are contingent upon receipt of funding to the High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

- The typical award can be up to \$24,200 in total costs including indirect rates set at the approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between the recipient and the Federal Government. If no such rate exists, a de minimis indirect cost rate of 15% may be used.
- Projects funds must be spent by September 14, 2027.
- Applicants cannot receive more than a cumulative total of two emerging issue awards as a Project Investigator.

Allowable expenses include all relevant project expenses including:

- Salary for key personnel, graduate students, and other support staff is allowed. Salary payment to faculty mentors is limited to 5% of a 12-month equivalent salary plus fringe benefits.
- Supplies and small specialized equipment (under \$5,000). Equipment purchased for the project becomes the property of the university sponsoring the principal investigator.
- Domestic travel necessary to conduct the research.

Disallowed expenses include:

- Faculty mentor salary >5% of a 12-month equivalent salary plus fringe benefits.
- Technical conference travel.
- Routine clerical assistance.

For projects with a research focus, proof of Human Subjects (or Animal Care) Institutional Review Board approval, if applicable, is required before funds will be disbursed.

Final Written Report

Instead of a formal final report, we will ask you to complete a survey about your project within 60 days following the end of the budget period. This survey will ask you to share information about program accomplishments, impact, presentations, publications, students/trainees supported, and any additional funding secured, in part, directly or indirectly from this award.

Although a formal interim report will not be required, HICAHS staff may contact awardees to obtain updates on research progress, including products, narratives, and photographs resulting from the award.

Acknowledgment Requirements

All presentations, posters, and publications resulting from HICAHS funding must acknowledge HICAHS and our federal funder (NIOSH) and use the HICAHS logo when appropriate. Funding statement provided below. Logo files will be provided for awarded projects at time of project start.

This [presentation/work/research/product] is supported by the High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety CDC/NIOSH Grant No. U54OH008085. Its content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of CDC/NIOSH.

Contact

For questions, concerns, or to discuss this opportunity further, please contact: Dr. Morgan Valley, Emerging Issues Lead, HICAHS Deputy Director – morgan.valley@colostate.edu