



California Department of Food and Agriculture VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL RESEARCH PROGRAM

2026 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Research proposals are currently being accepted by the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Vertebrate Pest Control Research Program (VPCRP) within the Integrated Pest Control Branch. Proposals may focus on research and/or education projects to enhance control measures of vertebrate pests that pose a significant threat to the welfare of state's agricultural economy, infrastructure, environment, and the public. CDFA does not support proprietary product development projects. Proposals that originate from outside of California are considered if the proposal includes relevance to vertebrate pest concerns within California. Proposals that include other sources of funding are strongly encouraged and welcomed.

FUNDING AMOUNTS

A maximum of \$200,000 is allocated for the Committee's approval each year. On average projects totaling \$55,000 two years are typical, but projects over \$55,000 and/or over two years will be considered on a case by case basis. The sum of all projects approved each year may not exceed \$200,000. Proposals leveraging other sources of funding are strongly encouraged and are welcomed.

PREPARING YOUR PROPOSAL

Please note that these guidelines have changed. Be sure to thoroughly read and adhere to all submittal requirements or your proposal will not be accepted.

Proposals must include Sections A through I as described below. Sections A through G must be submitted in Microsoft Word, single spaced using one-inch margins and 12-point Times New Roman font. Section H: Budget Template must be submitted in Microsoft Excel using the provided template. Budgets that do not use the provided template will not be accepted. Section I: Appendices may be submitted in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF. Sections A through G must not exceed 15 pages. Proposals that do not meet the specified formatting requirements or exceed 15 pages will not be accepted.

If you have questions about formatting or submitting your proposal, please contact VPCRP at (916) 764-7759 or IPCIfo@cdfa.ca.gov. To ensure fair competition, VPCRP staff does not provide guidance on the development of proposals.

SEND PROPOSALS TO

Submit an electronic version of your proposal to: IPCIfo@cdfa.ca.gov

Proposals that are incomplete, late, do not comply with formatting requirements or exceed 15 pages will be returned and eliminated from consideration. Proposals must be submitted via e-mail; mailed and faxed copies will not be accepted. Vertebrate Pest Control Program staff will reply with a confirmation e-mail when proposals are received; contact staff by calling (916) 764-7759 if you have not received a confirmation e-mail within two business days of your submission. The VPCRP is not responsible for incomplete e-mail transmissions.

PROPOSAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Proposals will be reviewed by scientific and administrative staff who will conduct an initial review of all submitted proposals for completeness. Proposals will be considered for funding twice annually during the Vertebrate Pest Control Research Advisory Committee (VPCRAC) Meetings. The VPCRAC deliberates and discusses the submitted proposals for their scientific, technical and operational merit, and decides in a yes/no vote whether to recommend the proposal for funding. Applicants may also present an oral presentation, not to exceed 15 minutes, to the committee during the meeting in which your proposal is scheduled for review. It is highly recommended that applicants be in attendance at the VPCRAC meetings when your project is considered to answer any questions or concerns that the committee may have.

VPCRAC is a committee comprised of government, industry, academic and public members that are appointed by the CDFA. VPCRAC members are responsible for recommending to the Secretary research priorities for various vertebrate pest control research projects and the amount of the assessment necessary to carry out those research projects. For more information about VPCRAC and past research projects that were funded, visit their website at www.VPCRAC.org.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

You will be notified by CDFA whether your project was selected for funding. If your project is selected for funding, please note that work on the project cannot begin until the grant agreement signed by both parties and executed. Interim and annual reports are required to assess project accomplishments, problems, and plans for the next work period. Grant payments are subject to receipt and acceptance of deliverables as defined in the Scope of Work. Researchers are required to attend a Board meeting in person to review their proposal with the Board.

TIMELINE

Proposals due 30 days before VPCRAC meeting
Project start date TBD

REPORT SECTIONS

A. Cover Page

1. Project Title.

Provide a unique and concise name for the proposed project. If the proposal is a continuation of a previous project, please keep the title consistent.

2. Project Leader(s).

Specify each project leader's name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. *A two-page resume, a list of recent publications, and a description of current research/outreach activities must be included for each project leader under Section I: Appendices.

3. Cooperator(s).

Specify each cooperator's name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. *A letter from each cooperator must be included under Section I: Appendices describing their role in the project, estimated time commitment, and a statement of agreement to participate in the project. Do not include a cooperator's name on the proposal unless a support letter is included with the proposal at the time of submission.

4. CDFA Funding Request Amount/Other Funding.

Provide funding request (\$\$) figure from CDFA and amount committed from extra-mural or in-kind sources for each year of the project. Specify organizations that have committed funding to this project including funding amounts, contact names, addresses, and telephone numbers.

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5. Agreement Manager.

Specify the person who will manage the grant on behalf of the recipient (i.e. UC Regents, Office of Sponsored Research, etc.). Include the organization/entity, grant manager name, phone number, email address, and mailing address.

B. **Executive Summary** (not to exceed two pages)

1. Problem.

Simply and concisely define the problem to be addressed.

2. Objectives, Approach, and Evaluation.

State specific project objectives, describe the approach to be used, and identify criteria that will be used to evaluate the project's success.

3. Audience.

Specify those who will use and benefit from the project findings or products. Please use plain English and define technical words.

C. **Justification**

1. CDFA VPCRAC Mission and Responsibilities

CDFA will specify what problems or areas of research that are needed for the Program based on the Board's list of priorities. Explain how the project will address one or more of the VPCRAC Priorities, as well as how the project will contribute to the VPCRAC mission of controlling vertebrate pests that pose a significant threat to the welfare of the state's agricultural economy and infrastructure, natural resources, or public health and safety.

2. Impact.

Explain agronomic, economic, environmental or other implications on a local, regional, and statewide basis.

3. Long-Term Solutions.

Indicate the project's potential for measurable progress toward long-term solution(s) to the specific problem(s) addressed in the proposal.

4. Related Research.

Describe previously conducted related research and/or education efforts.

5. Contribution to Knowledge Base.

Explain the project's contribution to current knowledge and specify new information to be generated by the project.

6. Grower Use.

Describe practical applications and incentives for growers to adopt the proposed practices.

D. **Objectives**

1. Provide a clear, concise, and complete statement of each specific research and/or educational objective(s), including outreach.

E. **Work Plans and Methods** (for multi-year projects, include a work plan for each year)

1. Work Plan.

Organize the work plan into project tasks and sub-tasks, which are units of work designed to achieve the specific project objectives. Each task should be numerically identified with a descriptive title and should include a description of the activities and methods. Describe interim and final task products and completion dates or milestones.

2. Methods.

Explain the methods to be employed, indicating data to be gathered, parameters to be measured, and methods of analysis to be used, including sampling scheme and experimental design, if applicable.

3. Experimental Site.

Provide a graphical description of experimental site, if applicable.

F. Project Management, Evaluation, and Outreach

1. Management.

Describe the role of project leaders and cooperators and briefly explain how the various participants' work will be coordinated.

2. Evaluation.

For primarily research-oriented projects, provide a method for assessing the progress and success of the project, including cost/benefit analysis of adoption of new technologies, as well as barriers to adoption, where applicable. For applicable education projects, define and provide a means to analyze success of project activities beyond counting the number of participants in educational activities. Provide specific plans for the evaluation.

G. Budget Narrative

Provide a detailed narrative of your proposed budget. Assume a start date of 6 months from VPCRAC Meeting date and explain all of the following:

- a. **Personnel Expenses.** Provide classification level, percent of time based on full time salary/wages, benefits, employment period, and name of individual to be hired, if available. For University of California and other public agencies and universities, specify if other funds come from existing staff salary, are extra-mural, or are in-kind. If funds are from staff salary, specify the amount on a percentage of Full Time Equivalent-basis.
- b. **Operating Expenses.** Itemize and justify all of the following operating expenses:
 - **Supplies:** Itemize and justify all supplies to be purchased.
 - **Equipment:** Itemize and justify all equipment purchases. During the grant period, titles to equipment purchased with CDFA funds will vest with the State. CDFA will only authorize expenditure for equipment (equipment with a life expectancy greater than one year or with a value greater than \$500) on a pro-rated basis. After the grant period, the state may transfer ownership or allow the grantor to purchase such equipment. The grantor must maintain inventory records for such equipment.
 - **Travel:** Itemize the number of trips, estimated mileage, destination(s), and identify who will be traveling. CDFA will reimburse travel expenses at the rates specified by the California Department of Personnel Administration. Only travel expenses to and from the project site(s) or to conduct outreach activities within California will be covered.
 - **Professional/Consultant Services:** Identify and explain any and all work or services to be sub granted. Sub granting will only be allowed with the expressed written permission of the state.
 - **Other Expenses:** Identify and explain any additional expenses not covered by the above categories.
- c. **Other Funding Sources.** List and explain all other organizations providing funding for this project.

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H. Budget Template (not included in the 15-page maximum)

Prepare a budget table for the project using the 2024 VPCRAC Project Proposal Budget Template Excel spreadsheet as a template. The template uses formulas to automatically generate totals as numbers are entered into the fields; do not alter the formatting or formulas in the unshaded cells. An example of a completed budget is included with the template. **Budgets submitted without using the template will not be accepted; applicants will be asked to resubmit the budget using the approved budget template or their proposal will be disqualified.** Assume a project start date of 6 months from VPCRAC Meeting date, and show amounts requested for each of the following categories:

- a. Personnel Expenses.
 - *Salary*: For each individual working on the project, list the name, percent time based on full-time salary, and their role in the project in the salary section.
 - *Benefits*: Percentage of benefits (fringe) to be paid may be listed in the benefits section.
- b. Operating Expenses. Enter the total amount requested for each year for all of the following operating expense categories. **All expenses must be itemized and justified in Section G: Budget Narrative.*
 - *Supplies*
 - *Equipment*
 - *Travel*
 - *Professional/Consultant Services*
 - *Other Expenses*
- c. Other Funding Sources. List each additional organization contributing funding to the proposed project. Specify funding to be contributed each year.

I. Appendices (not included in the 15-page maximum)

1. Project Leaders.

Include a two-page resume and list of recent publications. Also include a description of current research/outreach activities; provide information on all current, planned, pending, and recent projects, whether there is a specific time commitment and how it will impact the proposed project.

2. Cooperators.

Include a letter from each cooperator describing their role in the project, estimated time commitment, and statement of agreement to participate in the project. Copies of faxed letters are acceptable if attached to the proposal at submission time.

3. Supporters.

Include a letter from each supporter explaining the rationale for their support. Copies of faxed letters are acceptable if attached to the proposal at submission time.