

**COLORADO WATER CENTER
CSU GRANT PROGRAM
2025-2026 Call for Concept Papers**



Converging social, political, and cultural changes gave rise to the creation of land-grant institutions. CSU's land-grant mission provides the framework to advance our ability to address myriad water issues impacting the quality of life in Colorado, the U.S., and the world. To that end, the Colorado Water Center (CoWC) invites concept papers for Water Research, Extension, and Education projects that address these issues.

Concept papers should support inclusive and innovative transdisciplinary research, outreach, and educational projects that lead to positioning CSU as a leading institution in water resources science, engineering, and management. Concept papers are invited from a broad range of disciplines, including the biological and physical sciences, the social and human sciences, and engineering fields. Proposed projects should integrate both diverse perspectives on understanding our water systems and innovative mechanisms to transfer this understanding to students and water resource professionals.

PRIORITY FUNDING AREAS

The CoWC seeks to support 2025-26 CSU Grant Projects that advance knowledge and lead to actionable science in the following priority areas:

1. Sustainable water management that benefits agricultural, municipal, and environmental uses
2. Improved water quality and access in rural and urban environments

GRANT DETAILS

Water Research, Extension, and Education Projects

The purpose of this grant program is to invest in transdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships that ultimately lead to a more holistic understanding of water resource issues, and to integrate translation of this understanding into the water resource profession, as well as educate the future water workforce.

- The maximum funding for this grant is \$25,000. It is anticipated that up to three projects will be funded subject to funding availability.
- Concept papers are required to demonstrate how the project supports high-priority water topics by developing water scholarship, outreach, and education programs at CSU.
- Projects should expand CSU's presence in the water community, be led by both research faculty and extension personnel, include students, and develop new external collaborations.
- This project funding is expected to support the development of existing or new integrated research and extension project teams and eventually result in the development of large transdisciplinary external proposals and grants.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND COLLABORATION REQUIREMENTS

This call for concept papers targets all CSU faculty, staff and students with scholarly, outreach, or educational contributions that will be significantly enhanced by receiving the award.

- PI and co-PIs must be current CSU faculty members, research scientists, research associates or other staff working in water resources.
- The PI must be eligible to serve as a PI on an external grant.
- Special consideration will be given to concept papers that include:
 - At least one Academic Faculty Member and one PI eligible Engagement or Extension staff as PI or co-PI
 - Student engagement/involvement
 - Engagement/collaboration with external partners/stakeholders
 - Early career CSU faculty and staff or those who are new to the university or new to water-related research, extension, and engagement
- Previous applicants and awardees as well as senior faculty and staff are eligible to apply. However, applications submitted by a PI who has not met reporting requirements on a previous grant administered or awarded by CoWC are not eligible for funding.

CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Concept Paper Format

The concept paper (items B. 1-5 below) shall not exceed 3 single-spaced pages. The budget page and PI resumes do not count towards the 3-page limit.

Format guidelines for the proposal including tables, pictures, graphs, and figures, are as follows:

- 12-point font size
- Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins (all sides)

B. Concept Paper Preparation Guidelines (limited to 3 pages)

1. Project details and collaboration
 - Project title. Concise but descriptive.
 - Amount requested (max award \$25,000)
 - Project Co-PI(s) and other collaborators' information: names, affiliation, and role
2. Mini abstract (2 paragraphs)
3. Background and Purpose: brief summary of the literature, problem to be addressed, and how the project will create actionable science in the priority funding areas (see page 1)
4. Project Description: research questions, goals & objectives; brief summary of methodology; timeline of activities; collaborations and/or stakeholder engagement; expected outcomes, impacts, and benefits
5. Potential for developing external proposals
6. Budget: estimate of total costs and categories of expenses using the template provided (see

Attachment A). **Indirect costs are not allowed. If salary is requested for a CSU employee, fringe should not be included in the budget.** Note that if funds are requested for the purchase of equipment, provide a justification that indicates the names of faculty/staff that can use the equipment to support their programs, along with a description of how this equipment will be used as key facilities for future proposals seeking extramural funds. (Budget page does not count towards the concept paper 3-page limit.)

7. PI and Co-PI qualifications. Include resume(s) of the Principal Investigator(s) and Co-PIs. Resumes should not exceed two pages, list no more than 10 pertinent publications, and identify no more than 5 synergistic activities. (Resumes do not count towards the concept paper 3-page limit.)

C. Concept Paper Submission:

Concept papers must be submitted via email to Karen Schlatter (karen.schlatter@colostate.edu) as pdf files by 5 PM on March 31, 2025.

CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW

Water Research, Extension, and Education Projects

Concept papers will be reviewed by a Proposal Review Committee and evaluated based on:

1. Justification of proposed research, outreach, or education program addressing critical gaps in water resource knowledge
2. Feasibility of achieving project objectives and technical merit
3. Responsiveness to RFP priority areas (see page 1)
4. Qualifications of investigators
5. Potential for developing and sustaining transdisciplinary research and extension collaborations; and
6. Potential for submitting large transdisciplinary proposals to federal funding agencies (particular focus on USDA-NIFA and NSF)
7. Special consideration will be given to concept papers that include:
 - At least one Academic Faculty Member and one PI eligible Engagement or Extension staff as PI or co-PI
 - Student engagement/involvement
 - Engagement/collaboration with external partners/stakeholders
 - Early career CSU faculty and staff or those who are new to the university or new to water-related research, extension, and engagement

At the discretion of the Proposal Review Committee, PIs may be requested to explore collaboration with other projects that are submitted for funding, when there is significant overlap or leveraging between project concepts.

PROJECT DATES

Awards are anticipated to begin on July 15, 2025, and end on May 31, 2026.

PROJECT BUDGET

- All expenses must be finalized by the project end date. No extensions will be granted. Timely drawdown is expected, or funds will be withdrawn.

- The PI is expected to work with their departmental budget office to ensure their award is spent according to the approved budget. The PI's budget office is responsible for all project accounting and the department is responsible for any spending deficit.
- Funds may be used for:
 - Faculty, staff, and student salary including summer salary, but supplemental pay is not allowed
 - Travel and conference expenses
 - Development of instructional or training materials
 - Equipment up to \$5,000
 - Additional expenses directly related to research, extension, or education activities
- Indirect costs are not allowed. If salary is requested for any CSU employee, fringe should not be included in the budget.
- All awards are contingent on available funding.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Funded projects will be required to submit a year-end report and be willing to work with OEE Communications to produce articles and impact statements on the importance of their projects.
- Funded applicants will be asked to present their results and accomplishments at events, such as CSU Hydrology Days, campus seminars, or state and national conferences.
- A plan for publication of suitable results in top tier journals (Water Research, Extension, and Education Projects only)

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Projects should support the mission and goals of the Colorado Water Center.
- Projects should integrate CSU's Principles of Community and the mission and vision of the university's Diversity Statement.
- Funded applicants must comply with applicable University research integrity and compliance regulations and guidelines.

MORE INFORMATION

- Interested applicants are encouraged to learn about previously funded projects at watercenter.colostate.edu/grants/
- For general questions related to the call for concept papers contact Karen Schlatter (karen.schlatter@colostate.edu), Interim Director of the Colorado Water Center

ATTACHMENT A – Budget Sheet for Research, Extension, and Education Projects

BUDGET BREAKDOWN	Project Year: July 15, 2025 to May 31, 2026		
PROJECT TITLE:			
PI (College or OEE Unit):			
Co-PI (College or OEE Unit):			
Co-PI (College or OEE Unit):			
OEE Project Lead (if applicable):			
	CSU Grants Program		
	Rate	Amount	Total
PERSONNEL SALARIES			
Faculty:			
Administrative Professionals:			
Post Docs, Interns:			
Classified Staff:			
Student Hourly:			
GRA's:			
TOTAL PERSONNEL:			
DOMESTIC TRAVEL:			
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES:			
OTHER DIRECT COSTS			
Publications:			
Equipment Use Fees:			
Consultants:			
Other:			
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT:			
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:			
TOTAL PROJECT COST:			

*****NOTE:** If funds are requested for the purchase of equipment, provide a justification that indicates the names of faculty/staff that can use the equipment to support their programs, along with a description of how this equipment will be used as key facilities for future proposals seeking extramural funds.