

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute

for environmental education

Environment Research Grant 2021 Request for Proposals General Information

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute Environment Research Grants is to enhance the health and stability of ecosystems in West Michigan by providing scientific information to support land management decisions. Environment Research Grants provide funding for student and faculty researchers in natural areas management, biodiversity, and environmental monitoring research that takes place at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute and other regional sites. The Institute is specifically interested in funding projects that involve the following:

- Monitoring of threatened and endangered species
- Wild rice restoration
- Forest dynamics and emerging threats (particularly in dry forests and hardwood-conifer swamps)
- Watershed water quality monitoring and management
- Invasive species monitoring and management
- Social science of BMP implementation

The Institute is planning to support and carry out this program in a safe manner and may adjust the timing of the program and availability of housing and laboratory space due to the coronavirus pandemic.

2. Eligibility:

The Environment Research Grants program is available to faculty, undergraduate and graduate students from Pierce Cedar Creek Institute Consortium member institutions (see list at <https://cedarcreekinstitute.org/research.html>). All researchers must be 18 years of age or older at the start of the project. Applicants who are not citizens of the United States should contact the Institute prior to applying to make special arrangements.

3. Grant Award:

Budget requests should include the following (if applicable):

- Student stipends – applicants should request \$4,500 for each full-time undergraduate student researcher with a maximum of two FTE student researchers per project.

Graduate students may request up to \$4,500 if they are not receiving stipend support from their home institution.

- Faculty stipends – applicants can request up to \$3,000 as a stipend for the faculty mentor.
- Project support - applicants can request up to \$4,000 for research equipment, supplies, and project related travel for the faculty and students.
- The maximum amount that may be requested for a project with one FTE student researcher is \$8,500 and two FTE student researchers is \$13,000.

Student researchers may be identified by the faculty researcher or the Institute can help identify qualified student researchers.

Housing and meal service (continental breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday) is scheduled to be available for researchers from mid-May until mid-August. The announcement of projects funded will be made by March 15, 2021.

4. Responsibilities and Reporting:

The participants of all funded projects will need to sign a grant agreement and return it to the Institute by March 31, 2021. The grant agreement signifies that the grantees accept the responsibility to complete the proposed project and agree to the terms and conditions of the grant.

The following is required for all researchers. The dates and/or character of the programs may need to be adjusted based upon the status of the coronavirus outbreak.

1. Participate in an orientation meeting on April 17, 2021.
2. Resident student researchers are expected to participate in summer research program activities including weekly meetings and completing 20 service hours. Faculty are expected to lead one of the weekly meetings for student researchers.
3. Researchers (students and faculty) will provide a progress presentation and report in late June.
4. Researchers will present results of their summer work at the Research Report Meeting on October 2, 2021.
5. Researchers must submit a final report of their results by October 21, 2021. These reports will be reviewed and feedback will be provided to the researchers. Researchers will need to submit a revised report by November 15. Reports should also be distributed to any other organizations where research took place. All documents and reports submitted to Pierce Cedar Creek Institute will become the property of the Institute to use and duplicate at the Institute's discretion.
6. Grantees are responsible for providing data obtained during the study, including spatial information, to the Institute. Raw data from the project will not be made public without permission of the authors for a period of two years after the completion of the project.
7. Students and faculty mentors are required to participate in the evaluation of the research program.

Grantees are strongly encouraged to present their results at professional or student research

symposia or conferences. Grantees are also encouraged to submit their results for publication in scientific journals. There are limited funds available to cover travel or publication costs for grantees to present or publish funded research. Grantees are required to inform Pierce Cedar Creek Institute of any publications and presentations that are the result of Institute supported research and to acknowledge Pierce Cedar Creek Institute sponsorship on presentations or publications.

5. Grant Payments:

Student researcher stipends will be paid annually in five installments, with the final payment paid after the final report (with revisions) is received and all requirements listed above are met. Faculty stipends will be paid annually in two lump sums, one after the interim progress report is accepted and the second after the final report (with revisions) is approved (by Institute staff). Equipment and travel reimbursements will be paid after submission of expenses to the Institute. All reports and payment requests are due by November 15.

Application and Guidelines

1. Application

Parties that are interested in applying must submit a pre-proposal due by 5pm on November 24, 2020. This one- to two-page letter should outline your intention to submit a full proposal, with a brief description of your project, the questions you are looking at, and the data you will collect. Institute staff will provide feedback on the pre-proposal to help applicants complete the full proposal.

The completed full application (including signed cover sheet, proposal and attachments) is due at 5 pm EST, February 4, 2021. Up to date versions of the application are available at: <https://cedarcreekinstitute.org/research.html>.

Proposals and application should be e-mailed as a .docx file to Matthew Dykstra (dykstram@cedarcreekinstitute.org). Please submit as few files as possible to reduce the possibility of misplacing parts of your application. The application should have 1-inch margins and be in 11- or 12-point font. The Introduction, Project Narrative, and References should utilize continuous line numbering to make review easier.

Applications must include:

- a. A complete **cover sheet**.
- b. One paragraph **synopsis** of project written for the general public (200 words max).
- c. **Introduction** with Statement of Purpose/Problem/Significance and connection to the Institute's research purpose and priorities. (2 pages max)
- d. **Project Narrative** (4 pages max)
 1. Proposed methods/procedures of the work involved. Describe the division of labor between the faculty and student researchers. Include any equipment and lab

- space to be provided by the Institute.
2. Provide information on proposed statistical design and analysis.
 3. If applicable, describe procedures that will be used for handling of hazardous materials, potentially infectious microorganisms, animals, etc.
 4. Include information on any required Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval, state or federal permits, or human subject's research. If any of these is required, a copy of the approval must be submitted to Pierce Cedar Creek Institute prior to the start of on-site research activity.
 5. Dissemination plan for the presentation or publication of results.
- e. **References** including sources used to prepare proposal.
 - f. **Timetable** for this project, including projected information on start and end dates and information on projected housing needs for researchers during the research study.
 - g. **Budget table and narrative** summarizing and explaining any materials and supplies to be purchased and cost estimates. Travel to and from study sites can be requested. Include description of any other confirmed or anticipated sources of support.
 - h. Researchers' **resume** (students) or short CV (faculty).
 - i. Students must provide an unofficial **transcript**, reflecting courses completed and grades received and a letter of recommendation from their project advisor.
 - j. Documentation of permission or letters of support from any agencies or organizations that will be involved with the research.

Any questions regarding the grants can be directed to: Matthew Dykstra - Field Station Manager, dykstram@cedarcreekinstitute.org or 269-721-4473.

2. Award Evaluation Criteria

Available funds for projects are limited. The following factors will be considered in ranking projects and making award decisions for the *Environment Research Grant* program:

1. Quality of the proposal.
2. Project's connection to the Institute's research purpose and funding priorities.
3. Project involves community, environmental, or artistic partnerships, support, and/or funding.
4. Researcher qualifications.
 - a. Project adds to the development of the student researchers' academic and professional growth and development.
 - b. The application demonstrates the likelihood that the researchers will successfully complete the project.
5. Plans to disseminate the results.

Environment Research Grant Application - Cover Sheet

Deadline: February 4, 2021

College or University:

Faculty researcher

Name: Department:
Address:
Phone: E-mail:

Student researcher (optional)

Name:
Local Address:
Permanent Address:
Phone: E-mail:
Major: Emphasis (if applicable):
Anticipated graduation date: Current GPA:
Are you a US Citizen?

Student researcher (optional)

Name:
Local Address:
Permanent Address:
Phone: E-mail:
Major: Emphasis (if applicable):
Anticipated graduation date: Current GPA:
Are you a US Citizen?

1. Title of Research Project:

2. Dates of Project: _____ to _____

Approximate timeline for On-site Housing and Meal Support

3. Does this proposal require approval from: Human Research Review Committee
 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
 Animal or Plant Collection Permits

4. Budget Summary

- a. Does the project have any additional funding? If so, please describe the funding source and amounts:
b. Students Stipend Request \$
c. Faculty Researcher Stipend \$
d. Project Support (Equipment, supplies, and project-related travel) \$

Total \$_____

