Southern Integrated Pest Management Center
Notice of Funding Opportunity - Southern IPM Grants 2027-2030

Through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Southern Integrated Pest Management Center (SIPMC) solicits proposals that will expand the development and implementation of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in the Southern region of the United States. Funding is outcome-based, and the format of the proposal reflects this. We recommend reading through the entire NOFO before beginning your planning. All projects must further the SIPMC mission, which is to foster development and adoption of IPM, an approach to managing pests in ways that generate economic, environmental, and human health benefits.
The overall goals of the SIPMC are to: (1) Identify and prioritize producer pest management needs; (2) Coordinate efficient responses to high-priority and emerging pest management challenges; (3) Strengthen the capacity of programs that serve producers; and (4) Increase awareness, recognition, and adoption of effective IPM approaches. These goals are in line with the goals of the National Roadmap for Integrated Pest Management, and the Crop Protection and Pest Management program, from the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). Southern IPM Grants are expected to advance these goals by contributing to: timely responses to emerging issues of regional importance, improved communication promoting sound IPM-related decisions within the region, promoting further development and adoption of IPM, collaborative team building and broad-based stakeholder participation, documentation of the impacts and value of IPM strategies, techniques, programs and projects, and building support for IPM among stakeholders including the general public, and policymakers.
SIPMC has implemented similar grants programs previously with projects from 2004 through 2019 and from 2020 to present. This grants program was previously referred to as "Southern IPM Center Enhancement Grants" and changed to "Southern IPM Grants" as of the 2022 Grants cycle. SIPMC serves 13 Southern states, and two territories: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, the U. S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia.

Important Dates

Funding Year*	NOFO Open Date	NOFO Close Date	Project Start Date**	Project End Date
2027	October 5, 2026	November 20, 2026	March 1, 2027	February 29, 2028
2028	October 4, 2027	November 19, 2027	March 1, 2028	February 28, 2029
2029	October 2, 2028	November 17, 2028	March 1, 2029	February 28, 2030

*Funding is dependent upon continued USDA-NIFA funding.
**Project start dates are dependent on USDA-NIFA approval.
Given changes to the Regional Center Program timeframe, 2030 funding opportunities are still being determined, more information will be forthcoming.

I. PROJECT AND AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

Proposals may be submitted for Seed, Capstone, and Working Group project categories, as described below. Targeted total funding for all Seed, Capstone, and Working Group projects is $200,000 per project year. Individual projects are limited to $40,000.

The project period may be no more than twelve months (start and end dates in the table above). Only one no-cost extension (NCE) will be allowed per project. Project Directors should ensure their proposal has achievable timelines. Budgets may include indirect costs of not more than 30% of the total federal funds (TFFA), equivalent to 42.857% of total direct costs (TDC). Therefore, when preparing budgets, you should **compare** your institution's approved negotiated indirect cost rate by the 42.857% TDC which is equivalent to the 30% TFFA and then **use the lesser of the two amounts**.

1. Seed Projects

Successful proposals will have strong potential to initiate, enable, facilitate, and/or catalyze effective solutions to important IPM issues and challenges. These projects should do what the name implies – plant a seed that has good potential to grow into a solution. Examples include, but are not limited to: pilot outreach projects, early research, tool and method development, and collection of baseline data (documenting current practices) for early-stage research or outreach projects.

2. Capstone Projects

Successful proposals will build on previous research and development efforts for capstone projects involving outreach, implementation, and/or educational approaches. Examples include, but are not limited to, expanding successful demonstration programs, improving online educational resources, extending model systems, and collecting impact data for long-running projects.

3. Working Group Projects

Working Groups comprise diverse stakeholders working collaboratively to identify and address IPM priorities for important IPM issues. All funded working groups must produce an updated list of research, Extension, and regulatory priorities relevant to their area of focus. In addition, each working group must undertake a combination of team-building activities and/or output-based activities as follows:

a. **Team-building activities** develop and maintain the group itself. Examples include an annual meeting, routine teleconferences, and use of online communications. All of these activities should be directed toward ensuring an active and appropriately diverse stakeholder membership that finds consensus around defining and prioritizing research, development,

regulatory, and Extension activities to successfully address the issue at hand. Funded Working Groups are required to upload a participant list in Connect to help facilitate team organization and collection of outreach metrics.

b. **Output-based activities** are the work that the team does to address the pest management issue at hand, i.e. the research, development and Extension activities. These activities should address the group-identified priorities, and produce outputs such as those described in Seed and Capstone project types, clearly directed at generating the anticipated outcomes.

   Existing working groups **must** predominantly address output-based activities to merit any funding. SIPMC will not fund existing working groups that do not undertake output-based activities. Existing working groups must provide documentation of outcomes from previous projects and relevance to the Southern region.

   Individuals interested in forming a new Working Group without measurable outputs should contact SIPMC directors to discuss in-kind support in lieu of submitting a proposal.

The Southern IPM Center does have other support opportunities for other IPM products in the region. If you are looking for opportunities to document research, regulatory, and Extension priorities including IPM and crop production practices please contact Roger Magarey to discuss opportunities to develop a Crop Profile and/or Pest Management Strategic Plan Document.

B. Eligibility

Eligible applicants include private individuals and institutions, faculty and qualified staff of four-year universities, businesses, commodity organizations, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. Projects will be considered regardless of commodity or setting, including but not limited to crops, built environments, natural areas, livestock production, wildlife, forest health, and schools.

The primary Project Director (PD) must be from within the Southern region as defined by USDA-NIFA: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, the U. S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia. For the purpose of this NOFO, the term “territory” is used synonymously with the term “state,” and is inferred whenever the term “state” or “states” is used.

While the primary PD must be from within the Southern region, collaboration with individuals outside the region is both permitted and encouraged. The majority of the project funding must remain in the Southern region, although some funds may go to PDs from other regions if the work includes other states outside of the Southern region.

Potential applicants must be in compliance with reporting requirements for any project previously funded by the SIPMC to maintain eligibility for new funding. If you are not sure if you are in compliance with reporting requirements, contact our Evaluator, Dr. Tegan Walker.

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. General Information

1. Project Summary (250 words)
    a. Briefly explain the problem or opportunity, the approach in simple terms that can be understood by the general public, university personnel, private organizations, and budget staff, and the anticipated impact.
2. Project Type Indication (Seed, Capstone, Working Group)
3. Project Start Date and End Date
4. Project Director and Co-Director(s) (generated using USDA-NIFA required SciENcv)
5. Contracting State (must be in the Southern region)
6. Contracting Organization
7. Cooperating States
8. Project Discipline(s)
9. Commodities/Settings
10. Target Pests
11. Practices
12. Benefits and Impacts
13. Target Audiences
14. Outreach Methods
15. Funding Requested
16. Continuing Project Indication (500 words)
    a. If this project is a continuing project (a project that builds upon a previously funded SIPMC project), explain how this new proposal builds on existing work and is not duplicative.
17. Resubmission Indication (500 words)
    a. If this proposal is a resubmission (a proposal that was previously not funded by SIPMC), respond to reviewer comments.
18. Generative AI Disclosure
    a. Applicants are responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of their proposal submission, including content developed with the assistance of generative AI tools. Indicate the extent to which, if any, generative AI technology was used to develop the proposal.

B. Project Narrative

Each question of the Project Narrative section should be answered by using the WYSWYG text editor. The upload feature is only used for uploading images.

1. Problem and Justification (1400 words)

Describe in simple terms the problem or challenge, and the reason for your project. What is the situation, and how will this project improve it? Problems and their description should be concrete and well defined, and the anticipated outcomes will constitute their resolution. This section of the narrative should strive to address the following aspects:

a. Statement of Problem

Explain the problem being addressed. Describe opportunities to increase IPM information, adoption and/or implementation. Explain and document current gaps in information and its dissemination, or challenges to IPM adoption and/or implementation. Consider including the importance of the crop, commodity or setting, the pest(s), the economic ramifications, and the barriers and opportunities.

b. Justification and Regional Importance

Show the importance of the problem, and how it relates to the purpose of this grant program. Projects that offer benefits to two or more states in the region or that entail multi-state collaboration are encouraged but not required. The work may occur in only one state, but evidence of the project's potential value across several states (e.g., letters of support, citations of stakeholder prioritization in other states, etc.) should be provided. If possible, cite at least one IPM stakeholder priority used to formulate the project. Stakeholder-identified priorities with relevance to the Southern region have been identified in the National Roadmap for Integrated Pest Management, by the IPM Coordinators in each Southern state (SERA3), and through IPM Data. Please align your proposed activities with the current administration priorities as outlined in the appropriate Executive Orders.

c. Stakeholder Engagement

All proposals should demonstrate engagement with the intended audience. They must include evidence of appropriate stakeholder interest and participation, and indicate how the project addresses their needs. Projects that include direct stakeholder engagement such as working with growers, commodity or grower associations, IPM practitioners, or other groups in need of IPM solutions are highly encouraged. **(At least one stakeholder support letter is required. Please reference your support letter(s) here.)**

2. Objectives, Outputs, and Outcomes

a. Objectives

Present clear and concise project objectives. Each objective must be written as a separate entry.

b. Anticipated Outcomes

Indicate the intended outcomes of the project. What changes to knowledge, behavior, and conditions are expected to occur as a result of accomplishing the project objectives? Each outcome must be written as a separate entry. Indicate if the anticipated outcome is measurable during the project period and which objective(s) contribute to that outcome.

c. Planned Outputs

List the planned outputs of the project. These are what you intend to do or produce (activities, events, products, etc.). All outputs should take place within the project period. You do not need to include small and marginal outputs, or every step involved in each output, but you should indicate quantity when appropriate. Each output must be written as a separate entry and linked to previously stated objective(s). The planned completion date as well as the responsible party must also be entered for each output.

d. Indicators

The variables that are measured in order to quantify outcomes are customarily called indicators. Indicators of short term outcomes traditionally measure changes in knowledge and understanding. For new projects, medium term (changes in behavior) and long term outcomes (changes in conditions) will likely not be measurable within the duration of the funding period, but should nonetheless be included to understand the intended impact of the project. In the case of capstone projects and long-running working groups, measuring medium and long term outcomes may be a central part of the project. Indicators for outcomes show when and how you will know that the project has produced a change, and is achieving its goals.

List the indicators of the project by entering them individually and selecting the corresponding measurable outcome previously entered. The planned completion date as well as the responsible party must also be entered for each outcome.

3. Procedures (700 words)

Describe materials, methods, and other relevant technical aspects. This information will help reviewers form an accurate assessment of the feasibility of the project.

4. Resources and Expertise (700 words)

Some of the resources and expertise that will be mobilized to carry out the project are presented in the biosketches of the PD and team, and in letters of support. Describe briefly how they will be deployed in the tasks that are planned, and add resources and expertise not presented in those documents.

Document previous success in related or similar projects. Include leveraging of previous or concurrent projects by the PD and team, or others. For new working groups, describe intended membership and provide a list of already committed members as an appendix when available. For continuing working groups, mention any significant changes to the working group composition and include the membership list as an appendix. Proposals should, wherever possible, use existing information technology tools such as EDDMapS, Ag Pest Monitor, and MyIPM rather than proposing the development of new tools with similar functionality. Where new solutions are developed, explain the justification for creating a new tool.

5. Evaluation Plan (700 words)

Most of the evaluation plan can include references to the logic model and the outputs and outcomes mentioned above. In this section, add a description of the methods that will be used to track project progress (completion of outcomes) and measure indicators (outcomes measurable during the project period).

Measuring changes implies a record of the state of things before the project takes place, i.e. baseline data. In cases where that baseline data is available from third parties, or you have collected it previously, you should reference those sources here, and plan to include that data in your final report. Note that Seed Projects are intended to grow beyond initial funding by SIPMC. Even though medium and long term outcomes may not be anticipated within this funding period, using a Southern IPM Grant to record the baseline state at the beginning of a project is invaluable in demonstrating change later, thus supporting the case for further funding at that time.

Return on Investment (ROI) is one way to measure the economic impacts of IPM programs. Economic data as evaluation metrics for agriculture programs are easy to identify because agricultural products are market based commodities. To calculate the ROI, use economic impact data and apply it to the following formula: Benefits-Costs/Costs. Economic impact data for IPM programs can be measured through various economic indicators (yield increases, costs reductions, etc.) to measure cost-benefit ratio. For example, producers report fewer applications of a particular chemical as a result of IPM recommendations. The cost of the application multiplied by the number of applications the producer didn't apply is then calculated to provide reduction in costs.

6. **Literature Cited**
   List only publications cited in the proposal.

C. Proposal Documents

Upload each document in the requested format using the provided templates.

1. **Cover Page and Assurances Form**
   Download the Cover and Assurances Form, complete it, and convert it to PDF prior to submitting. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) **must sign** and check the box indicating institutional approval of the entire proposal including all pages of this form. **Failure to obtain AOR approval may result in your proposal being rejected.** The project title should be descriptive and no longer than 100 characters (i.e. letters, numbers, punctuation, and spaces between words). Use the IPM acronym rather than writing out Integrated Pest Management. Project start and end dates should be consistent with dates entered in the GMS. If your proposal includes human subjects research, such as grower surveys, please ensure that you complete section C of the assurance statement. If your proposal is funded, you will need to provide your institution's IRB approval letter before beginning your research involving human subjects. IRB approval is not needed prior to submission of the proposal.

2. **Logic Model**
   Download the logic model template as an editable Word document. Once completed, convert the document to PDF prior to submitting. Minimum font and margin requirements may be relaxed for the Logic Model page only, although it should be readable without magnification.

   Funding is outcome-based, therefore, the logic model is a central part of the proposal. The logic model should be viewed as a condensed version of the proposal, arranged to highlight the logical and temporal links that lead from the problem to its resolution through the activities and products that are proposed. It is expected that the narrative, and most of the other sections, will be an expanded version of the components of the logic model.

3. **Key Personnel**
   Download the key personnel template as an editable Word document. Once completed, convert the document to PDF prior to submitting. Submit Key Personnel information as a single PDF. Key Personnel are defined as significant contributors to the project, but are **NOT** PDs or Co-PDs.

   In the document, identify key personnel (no CV or Biosketch necessary for key personnel) and each institutional unit contributing to the project. In multi-institution projects, each institution should be identified and the lead institution designated. Applicants should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each person and institutional unit of the project team, if applicable.

If the project includes consulting, collaborative or sub-contractual arrangements, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified in the budget justification narrative and budget. In addition, evidence should be provided here that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. Acceptable documentation for this purpose includes letters of intent or statements of work from the individual or organization. Copies of either letters or email messages from the collaborators will suffice for this purpose. Merge them into a single PDF document and upload them in the Letters of Collaboration form field under Proposal Documents.

4. **Budget**

Each proposal is required to include a detailed itemized budget (i.e., Budget Worksheet) and a budget justification statement (i.e., Budget Justification Narrative).

a. **Budget Worksheet**

Download the budget worksheet and submit it as an Excel (.xslx) file. Budgets must not exceed $40,000. If the project entails multiple contracts, include separate budget forms and budget justification narratives for each institution. Budgets may include indirect costs of not more than 30% of the total federal funds (TFFA), equivalent to 42.857% of total direct costs (TDC). Therefore, when preparing budgets, you should **compare** your institution's approved negotiated indirect cost rate by the 42.875% TDC which is equivalent to the 30% TFFA and then **use the lesser of the two amounts**.

b. **Budget Justification Narrative**

Download the Budget Justification Narrative and submit it as a PDF. If you have more than one narrative, combine into one file. A detailed budget justification narrative using the template provided must be included. Be sure that the budget justification narrative matches the budget worksheet. Items should correspond with and be ordered similarly to major budget lines in the Budget Worksheet, but should also provide more detail. Explicitly provide the computations that lead to the numbers presented. If consulting, collaborative, or sub-contractual arrangements are included in the project, these arrangements should be fully explained. A proposed statement of work and a budget for each arrangement involving the transfer of substantive programmatic work or the providing of financial assistance to a third party must be provided. Foreign travel, and office supplies are not allowed.

5. **Current and Pending Support Form**

Current and Pending Support Form should be generated using USDA-NIFA required SciENcv format. A separate form is required for the PD and each Co-PD. Include the current proposal under the “pending” line.

6. **Conflict of Interest Form**

   Download the Conflict of Interest Form, and submit in PDF format. Provide a separate form for the PD and each co-PD. Remember to include the name of the PD at the top of the sheet. Combine all forms into a single PDF before uploading.

7. **Letters of Stakeholder Support**

   At least one letter of support from stakeholders is required, but more are encouraged. Upload letters of stakeholder support as a single PDF document. Stakeholders letters from organizations and individuals supporting the project such as growers, industry or commodity associations, etc. are highly encouraged.

8. **Letters of Collaboration**

   Letters of Intent for Key Personnel are required. Other letters of intent, work product, or other expertise from collaborators are strongly encouraged but not required. This can be submitted as a single PDF or as multiple PDFs.

9. **Appendices**

   Supplementary materials may be submitted in a single PDF file as appendices. The most common use for this is to submit letters from non-PD and non-Key Personnel collaborators, and organizations (for instance, interested Working Group members), which may be included in a single appendix. Project Directors are strongly cautioned not to abuse this provision in an attempt to circumvent page limits.

III. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals must be submitted in electronic format through the online Grant Management System by 5:00 p.m. **Eastern Standard Time (EST)**, on the due date.

A. Upon visiting the grant management website, you will be prompted to create an account or login. The login system uses your email as the key identifier, so be consistent with which email account you enter here. Follow the instructions to create an account or use your account information to log in.

1. Create an account and login
2. Access the grant form in the online Grant Management System

B. Select “Start a new grant proposal” under “Apply” on the Grants Home Screen.

C. Under “Southern IPM Grants” with the corresponding year, you may then select “Begin a new proposal.” You have now started your application for a Southern IPM Grant.

D. Once you have completed all the required questions in all sections of the online application, you will then have the option to submit your application. *Note: You can save your progress of the application at any time and come back at a later time to finalize and submit.

E. Click “Submit Application” by the deadline to be considered for the grant. PD’s should review if their proposal attachments are correctly submitted. Any issues with the Grant Management System including the incorrect attachment of documents must be reported by email prior to the deadline.

F. Once you submit your application, e-mail acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the Project Director.

G. Video tutorials are also available.

IV. REVIEW PROCESS AND PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

A panel of experts will rate proposals using the criteria shown below. While this program will support several project types, the review panel will use the same criteria for all proposals. Proposals will be funded in order of ranking until the funding is exhausted. Proposals recommended for funding will undergo USDA-NIFA approval prior to funds being released.

A. Evaluation Criteria

SIPMC will use the following criteria to evaluate applications:

1. **Project Relevance (30 points)**
   a. The problem is clear and easy to understand with demonstrably relevant to the priorities of the Southern region.
   b. Stakeholder needs are detailed and addressed and align with SIPMC's mission.
   c. Significant and widespread expected impact throughout the region.
2. **Technical Merit (45 points)**
   a. The objectives are concise, clearly stated, and align to the Statement of Problem.
   b. Outputs are clear, well organized, and achievable within the project period.
   c. Outcomes are clear and concise, targeted and realistic, and measurable (even if beyond project timeframe)
   d. All activities are thoroughly described and detailed. Procedures are appropriate and strongly aligned with project outputs.
   e. Comprehensive and clear evaluation plan for assessing project success and evaluating project impact.
3. **Proposal Quality (25 points)**
   a. PD and team clearly demonstrate expertise needed to conduct the project, documented commitment from collaborators, and the project identifies and leverages appropriate resources.
   b. Proposal is complete, follows specified format, and information is presented clearly and accurately.
   c. Strong potential for high return on investment with clear measurable outcomes and cost-benefit analysis.

B. Disqualification

Proposals will be returned without review if any of the following are true:

1. Failure to obtain institutional approval
2. The requested budget exceeds $40,000
3. The Project Director is not located in the Southern region

4. The majority of funds are not spent in the Southern region
5. Does not include at least one letter of stakeholder support

V. PROJECT REPORTS

Successful applicants are required to submit a final report within sixty (60) days after the end date of the project. Along with the information required in the report, SIPMC will also request pictures of your project and may contact you for an interview for communication purposes. Final reporting will be done through the Grant Management System.

VI. PROGRAM CONTACTS

A. Notice of Funding Opportunity questions about a proposal:
Roger Magarey (rdmagare@ncsu.edu) - Grants Manager and SIPMC Co-Director
Joe LaForest (laforest@uga.edu, 229-386-3298) - SIPMC Co-Director

B. Technical questions regarding submission of a proposal and Troubleshooting:
Brian Holderman (bholder2@ncsu.edu) - Grant Management System Programmer

C. Project support provided by the Southern IPM Center:
Joe LaForest (laforest@uga.edu, 229-386-3298) - Technology
Tegan Walker (twalker6@ncsu.edu) - Evaluation
Kayla Watson (kaylawatson@ncsu.edu) - Communication

VII. PROPOSAL DOCUMENT LINKS

A. Budget Justification Narrative:
https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Budget_Justification_Narrative.docx
B. Budget Worksheet:
https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Budget_Worksheet.xlsx
C. Conflict of Interest Form:
https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Conflict_of_Interest_Form.docx
D. Cover and Assurances Form:
https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Cover_and_Assurances_Form.pdf
E. Key Personnel: https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Key_Personnel_Form.docx
F. Logic Model Form:
https://grants.ipmcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/SIPMC_Logic_Model.docx