

NCKRI National Seed Grant Program
FY 2019/2020

Deadline: Thursday, September 12th, 2019

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) invites proposals for FY19/20 Seed Grants in support of cave and karst research.

Application deadline: September 12th, 2019, 5:00 PM Pacific Time

Background and Goals

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) is a non-profit government-supported institute headquartered in the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Its goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research, education, environmental management, and data acquisition and sharing.

In 2019, NCKRI initiated a seed grant program designed to facilitate and support cave and karst research at academic and research institutions across the United States. These seed grants are intended to enable investigators to initiate new cave and karst research, and encourage new scientists to enter the field.

This funding opportunity is made possible by generous support from the National Park Service.

Application Criteria

Principal Investigators (PIs) at any academic or research institution in the United States are invited to apply.

- 1. New research:** Only new, unfunded projects will be considered, and seed grant funds may not be used to support existing studies. Because these grants are intended as seed money to enable new research directions, the investigator should not have published on the research or received funding for it from another agency, and should clearly describe how the proposed activity truly represents a new direction for them and their research group.
- 2. Clear relevance to cave and karst science:** NCKRI's goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research; thus, the research described in the proposal should be clearly relevant to cave and karst science. Basic and applied research in any field of cave and karst science will be considered.

- 3. Research addressing the priorities of the National Park Service (encouraged but not required):** NCKRI seed grant funds are made possible by generous support from the National Park Service. Therefore, projects addressing fundamental scientific questions or management applications in caves within the National Park System are encouraged. Proposals for work in a national park should include a letter of support from an appropriate authority at the park.
- 4. Outreach:** Each project must include an outreach component. Examples of appropriate outreach projects are instructional programs in a K-12 setting, video presentations of research posted on an institutional or NCKRI video channel, collaboration with a show cave or museum (including the NCKRI museum), college-level outreach initiatives, or collaboration with an artist. Investigators or their students/postdocs should expect to spend a total of 5-10 hours on outreach in addition to preparation time.

Finalists will be selected based on scientific merit and quality of the proposal, alignment with cave and karst science and NCKRI research priorities, and the potential longevity of the proposed research (that is, the likelihood that pilot data obtained from the project will make the research team competitive for support from other funding agencies). Lead PIs cannot have been a lead PI on a previously accepted NCKRI seed grant.

Budgetary information

NCKRI expects to fund two projects with total awards up to \$25,000 each. Project periods may be up to 12 months, but funds must be fully expended before the end of the federal fiscal year (9/30/2020) regardless of project length.

The NCKRI National Seed Grant Program is intended to be a small or seed funding source. NCKRI encourages institutions to give special consideration to this funding and recommends a waiver of Facilities & Administrative (F&A) cost recovery for these grants. Please provide evidence of an F&A cost waiver if relevant, and if your institution will be removing F&A costs, that should be reflected in the budget. (New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology will be the negotiating party.)

The budget and budget justification should be two pages in length. Please include an itemized budget (1 page) and budget justification (1 page) including details of personnel (salaries, fringe), materials and supplies, analytical costs, other expenses, travel, and indirect costs (if no F&A waiver is provided).

Reporting

Awardees will be featured on the NCKRI website and annual report, and will be required to provide a conceptual summary and a figure of their proposed research for the NCKRI website and report before any funds are disbursed. A final report will be due to NCKRI by the designated

project completion date, including a list of any presentations and publications resulting from the research. We will also request that investigators provide a 2-3 page summary for the NCKRI annual report and website (2-3 pages, 2-3 figures).

After one year, and upon submission of the report, recipients are eligible for up to \$2500 for publication fees or travel support for PIs and/or their students to present at national or international conferences.

To Apply

Please submit a proposal document containing the following sections as a single merged pdf using our online application system by the deadline.

The proposal will include the following parts:

1. Title, list of PIs/Co-Is, and summary (300 words maximum) on a single page.
2. Proposal document – **5 pages maximum** (1-inch margins, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or equivalent font) which includes the following sections in no particular order:
 - a. Project description, including a brief background, objectives, and approach, with sufficient technical detail to pass review.
 - b. Significance of the proposed research to cave and karst science.
 - c. Description of the research team, including the roles and qualifications of the PIs and Co-PIs, graduate students, or any other personnel involved.
 - d. Project timeline and activity schedule (small table or graphic).
3. Literature cited.
4. Itemized budget (1 page) and justification (1 page), including salaries, supplies, equipment, etc. Budgets may not exceed \$25,000.
5. CV – 2 page CV for each PI and Co-PI.
6. Letter(s) of collaboration or support.

Applicants are also asked to provide the name, affiliation, phone and email address of 3-6 unconflicted reviewers.

Questions

Please direct any questions about submission or budget preparation to Judith McShannon (Judith.McShannon@nmt.edu, 575-835-6940). Other questions about this RFP should be directed to Daniel Jones, NCKRI Academic Director (daniel.s.jones@nmt.edu, 575-835-5049).