

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CENTER  
PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM (2024-2025)**

**INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES**

The University of Washington's PNASH Center is dedicated to the prevention of illness and injury among agricultural producers, workers, and their families. The PNASH Center focuses on safe and sustainable agricultural workplaces and communities with an emphasis on injury and illness prevention, especially among hired laborers, migrant/seasonal workers, and children. Our approach includes:

1. Working in partnership with employers, workers, agencies and other research and service organizations.
2. Conducting innovative research and intervention programs that focus on problem solving.
3. Taking solutions to the workplace and community through training, outreach, and participatory research.

Through a competitive process, the PPP will award pilot research projects a maximum annual direct cost of up to \$30,000. Funded and recently completed projects have the option of applying for an additional education/research translation component with a maximum of \$5,000. Projects are expected to have a duration of 12 months. The PPP is critical to the Bidirectional Community-Academic Framework proposed by the PNASH Center by providing a mechanism to support research addressing stakeholder priorities and support emerging partnerships.

Successful applicants will be academic investigators seeking to conduct pilot research studies to inform future large-scale research projects focused on the needs of agricultural workers in the Pacific Northwest. This PPP provides new and established investigators with opportunities to:

- Develop preliminary data, tools, or to support new proposals.
- Adapt or evaluate proven tools or techniques for new populations, workplaces, or delivery methods.
- Develop new interdisciplinary approaches or partnerships.
- Evaluate the merit of new ideas, or new approaches to existing methodologies or datasets.
- Explore new directions in research including new prevention/intervention approaches.
- Apply their expertise to the field of agricultural safety and health.
- Demonstrate needs and address priority areas of equity and diversity in agricultural health and safety.

Eligible investigators must be affiliated with the institutions within the HHS Region 10 but may collaborate with researchers outside of the Region with specialties/expertise essential to the project; and must demonstrate a strong existing research interest in agricultural worker health and safety and/or be working in complementary or non-traditional disciplines but demonstrate cross-disciplinary applicability.

The PPP participates in the Center-wide program monitoring, tracking progress, activities, and products. Previous PPP awardees have contributed greatly to the success of the PNASH Center

through the development of new partnerships, scientific publication, and career development of young investigators.

### **Program Overview**

The PNASH Center administers the PPP to support new initiatives in research, intervention, and translation. The PPP will fund projects in Years 1 through 5 through a competitive process for a maximum annual direct cost allocation up to \$30,000 and a project duration of 12 months.

The program will follow the mechanism previously developed and implemented by the PNASH Center. This is a formal process that includes: 1) release of a request for proposals for Northwest investigators; 2) internal and external review and scoring of proposals; 3) notification of award or request for revision and resubmission; and 4) a record of program process and project results.

### **Priority areas**

This program provides both early stage and experienced investigators with opportunities to:

- Develop preliminary data or expertise to support new proposals,
- Adapt or evaluate proven tools or techniques for new populations, workplaces, or delivery methods,
- Evaluate the merit of new ideas, or new approaches to existing methodologies or datasets,
- Explore new directions in research, prevention/intervention, and education/translation,
- Apply their expertise to the field of agricultural safety and health, and
- Leverage emerging technologies in supporting a healthy, safe, and productive AgFF workplace.

In addition, the PPP places a special emphasis on supporting meritorious projects that widen PNASH's work in the industries of fishing and forestry, and projects that support early-stage investigators.

The Pilot Project Program's annual process includes:

1. Review of pre-proposal submissions,
2. Invitation to submit a full/final proposal,
3. External and internal review of final applications,
4. Notice of award to successful applicants,
5. Conduct project, and
6. Final peer-reviewed scientific report or thesis/dissertation.

### **Geographic Focus**

The PPP is intended to support researchers affiliated with the institutions within the HHS Region 10 but may collaborate with researchers outside of the Region with specialties/expertise essential to the project. Project must be directly relevant and applicable to workers, agricultural communities, and workplaces within HHS Region 10. As a Center we recognize that many health and safety solutions are unique to the workplaces, worker populations, and environment of our Region 10 service area. However, larger emerging concerns such as wildfire smoke exposure, heat and infectious diseases may benefit from a wider Western regional focus. The pilot program mechanism is an ideal venue to support research for areas that may benefit from cross-region collaborations. As such, in Year 1, we will explore the possibility of cross-center pilot grant collaboration on priority issues that affect the

broader Western region. We have extensive experience within the PNASH Center of initiating and participating in cross-center partnerships but have not, yet, extended this to the PPP funding mechanism.

### **Application deadlines**

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| 1) Pre-proposal applications are due to the PNASH Center       | June 3, 2024       |
| 2) Competitive applicants are invited to submit full proposals | June 17, 2024      |
| 3) Full invited proposals are due                              | July 22, 2024      |
| 4) Award notification and announcement                         | September 2, 2024  |
| 5) Start of award  | September 30, 2024 |
| 6) Completion of funded small grants project                   | September 29, 2025 |

The PPP stimulates and supports new and expanded research, prevention/ intervention, and education/translation activities in the area of occupational safety and health in Northwest farming, forestry, and fishing, that place a special emphasis on supporting meritorious projects that widen PNASH's existing work, and those projects that support early-stage investigators. PPP are expected to identify relevant NIOSH priority goals during their submissions. The evaluation criteria for proposals directly account for alignment with identified strategic goals.

### **Funding Amount**

The PPPs is a competitive process, where the PNASH Center will fund pilot research awards. These pilot research awards will be awarded to projects through a competitive process for a maximum direct annual cost allocation of \$30,000 each. Funded projects will have the option of applying for an education/research translation Supplement Grant with an additional maximum \$5,000 funding. The PPPs funding period is for a duration of twelve (12) months with the project period beginning on September 30, 2024 and ending on September 29, 2025.

### **Application Description:**

- 1. PPPs funds available are up to \$30,000 per project.** PPPs funding allows Principal Investigators the financial backing to explore the potential for large-scale research projects. The PPP funding provides new and established investigators the opportunities to:
  - Develop preliminary data or tools to support new proposals.
  - Adapt or evaluate proven tools or techniques for new populations, workplaces, or delivery methods.
  - Develop new interdisciplinary approaches or partnerships.
  - Leverage emerging technologies in supporting a healthy, safe, and productive AgFF workplace.
  - Evaluate the merit of new ideas or new approaches to existing methodologies or datasets.
  - Explore new directions in research including new prevention/intervention approaches.
  - Apply their expertise to the field of agricultural safety and health.
  - Demonstrate needs and address priority areas of equity and diversity.

Please see Guidelines for Review and Evaluation.

For applicants outside of existing PNASH faculty, please contact the PNASH Center prior to submitting a Pre-proposal Application to be joined with a project liaison. The Project Liaison will provide guidance and consultation to ensure your project is responsive to the program goals and criteria.

<b>ELIGIBILITY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The principal investigator (PI) is affiliated with the institutions within the HHS Region 10 but may collaborate with researchers outside of the Region with specialties/expertise essential to the project.</li><li>• The investigator has a strong and demonstrated interest in agricultural worker health and safety, and/or is working in complementary or non-traditional disciplines and demonstrates cross-disciplinary applicability.</li></ul>
<b>PI must meet one of the following criteria:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trainees and early-stage investigators (e.g., post-docs, occupational medicine residents, fellows, graduate students, etc.) interested in advanced training in occupational health and safety research.</li><li>• Trainees must list a qualifying advisor/mentor.</li><li>• Investigators from other disciplines and institutions interested in developing innovative research efforts in collaboration with PNASH Center faculty.</li><li>• Investigators within the PNASH Center are proposing innovative research directions and topics which they had not previously studied.</li><li>• Regional stakeholders, provided they are working with eligible faculty members.</li><li>• Previous Pilot Project awardees seeking new research directions are eligible to apply but will be additionally evaluated based on the productivity of the prior awarded project(s).</li></ul>

Please contact Judy Lysiak for more information (206) 616-1958, [judy13@uw.edu](mailto:judy13@uw.edu).

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**GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

**The same review and evaluation guidelines will be applied to Pilot Project Proposal Applications and requests for Education/Translation Supplements. Partnerships, dissemination plans and demonstrated ability to produce impactful end products will weigh heavily when considering supplement requests.**

Submitted proposals are distributed to one internal PNASH investigator whose area of interest align with the proposed research as well as 1 to 2 external investigators recruited from other NIOSH Ag Centers and NIOSH funded ERC or Total Worker Health Centers. Reviewers are asked to score each proposal, following an NIH style score sheet, and considering the criteria below. PNASH leadership then performs programmatic review of scored proposals to select successful applicants.

**Significance**

Is the specific question being asked relevant and important to stakeholders and not already answered elsewhere? Does the project align with the PNASH Center and Strategic Goals for agriculture, forestry, and fishing? What is the seriousness of hazard, exposure numbers, and the likelihood that this intervention will make a difference? Is the project likely to improve the health and safety of Pacific Northwest producers, workers, and their families? Does the project duplicate or overlap with existing training and translation efforts in the region or products/programs developed elsewhere for this target population?

**Investigator(s) qualifications**

Is the investigator well qualified to undertake the work described in the project? Does the investigator have appropriate backgrounds, or have they obtained adequate advice from other senior investigators? Early career investigators are encouraged to lead pilot projects, but they should have a capable advisor identified to assist them.

**Innovation**

Does this project represent new and creative approaches to a problem? Is the approach interdisciplinary? Will the project engage new communities in the Pacific Northwest region? Does this project meet an existing need within their defined community or worker population, and is this need demonstrated with supporting data?

**Approach**

Does the project have clearly stated aims and a well-defined study design/program plan? Are the engagement, data-collection, and education approach appropriate? Does the proposal explain how the results or products will influence practice and sustained adoption? Does the proposal discuss limitations, or pitfalls that might be encountered? Is there sufficient time and personnel budgeted to achieve what has been set forth in the proposal? Are proposed collaborations properly documented (i.e., letters from collaborators)? If an education project, has the applicant demonstrated adequate capacity and qualifications for effectiveness in achieving their education goals?

If a translation study, is a research-to-practice (r2p) strategy included as a specific aim? Has the applicant demonstrated industry specific knowledge as well as cultural and linguistic understanding of the target worker population?

### **Future funding potential**

Is the project likely to develop valid preliminary evidence, products, or a program to support future proposals for outside funding? Does the proposal identify potential future sources of funding for research or dissemination?

### **Overall effectiveness and impact**

In a summary score please indicate your overall impression of this proposal taking into consideration what has been asked above and any other factors you consider relevant. The summary score is not a simple average of the five categories listed above. It should reflect your final judgment of the quality of the proposal.

### **PRIORITIES:**

- **Relevance to PNASH Center and Strategic Goals:** Proposals should specifically name which agenda they seek to demonstrate relevance. See the following agendas:
- NIOSH Strategic Plan, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/about/strategicplan/default.html>
- NORA AgFF, <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/agff/default.html>
- Total Worker Health, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh/default.html>
- Future of Work, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/future-of-work/default.html>
- American Indian and Alaska Native Worker Safety and Health Strategic Plan, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2023-123/default.html>

Projects that do not address needs identified above should provide justification with evidence from epidemiological, clinical, or industrial sources.

**Collaborative Research:** Collaborations between institutions and with affected communities in Region 10 and with the PNASH Center are encouraged. Proposals will be reviewed on the merit of new and creative approaches that are ideally interdisciplinary, and whose outcomes will result in projects involving more than one investigator or community. Please submit letters of support with your final proposal.

**Research to Practice (r2p):** Each proposal should describe how the final results and products will influence practice and promote best practices. Research projects may highlight publications, national presentations, and plans for submitting a full proposal. For intervention projects, your r2p strategy should be included as a specific aim. For education projects, r2p is your overall goal. For information on NIOSH's r2p initiatives see <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/r2p/>.

**Evaluation Component:** Required for all projects. All projects should evaluate the extent to which the project met the stated aims. Intervention projects seeking to reduce injury or illness should include an evaluation component that addresses outreach goals or feasible intermediate measures of impact that can be accomplished within the project period.

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**AWARDEE POST-AWARD MANAGEMENT**

**Records Maintenance:** Records of all letters of intent, pre-proposals, and final proposals, as well as correspondence regarding the review process, grant-making, and final actions are maintained within the PNASH hardcopy files and computer server system, which is regularly backed up and archived at an offsite location. All materials that are received in hard copy format are scanned and stored on this system. All records are available to NIOSH upon request.

**Human Subjects IRB (or other protections):** Funded projects involving human subjects and animals must obtain approval from the UW-IRB or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before funding will be released. If the award is external to the UW, does not involve any UW employees or facilities, and the grantee's institution has an accredited IRB and IACUS, then the UW accepts the grantee's institution review.

The PNASH IAC is composed of senior researchers with extensive experience in Human Subjects and Animal research. However, if any questions arise about whether a particular project requires IRB or Animal Care review, we facilitate putting the applicant in touch with the appropriate oversight office, direct personnel to training and work with investigators to ensure that all appropriate training and approvals are in place before the activities begin.

**Fiscal Responsibilities:** External applicants must begin billing within 90 days of contract receipt and must submit bills at least quarterly and no more frequently than monthly. External Institutions are required to submit final financial status reports no later than 60 days after the end of the award period.

**Communications:** Acknowledge funding support in publications and presentations resulting from the award with *“Supported by the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (NOSH/CDC Cooperative Agreement #5 U54OH007544-22-00).”*

**Reporting & Evaluation:** All PNASH Pilot Program projects are required to submit an annual progress report and a final scientific report. Manuscripts for submission for peer-reviewed publication and student thesis reports can be submitted in lieu of a final report. Annual reports are due in early September and PNASH will send a request with submission guidelines to report on activities, results, or outcomes (publications, presentations, independent grant applications, SOPs, websites, etc.) In addition, PIs of Pilot Projects are asked to share their results and progress (as appropriate) in both internal and external forums including, but not limited to: PNASH quarterly Investigator Meetings (in person or virtually), newsletters, and national conferences. The final report also requires the investigator to present their findings to the Internal Advisory Committee.

If you have questions about how the criteria should be applied or interpreted, contact Judy Lysiak, [judy13@uw.edu](mailto:judy13@uw.edu).